

LIBRARY OF CONGRESS



00004157588















HELEN GRANT, GRADUATE



## BOOKS BY AMANDA M. DOUGLAS

---

### THE HELEN GRANT BOOKS

ILLUSTRATED BY AMY BROOKS

HELEN GRANT'S SCHOOLDAYS . . . . .	\$1.25
HELEN GRANT'S FRIENDS . . . . .	1.25
HELEN GRANT AT ALDRED HOUSE . . . . .	1.25
HELEN GRANT IN COLLEGE . . . . .	1.25
HELEN GRANT, SENIOR . . . . .	1.25

---

ALMOST AS GOOD AS A BOY. Illustrated by BERTHA G. DAVIDSON . . . . .	1.25
HEROES OF THE CRUSADES. Fifty full-page Illustrations from GUSTAVE DORÉ . . . . .	1.50
LARRY (THE \$2000 PRIZE STORY) . . . . .	1.00
THE KATHIE STORIES. Six Volumes. Illustrated. Per volume . . . . .	1.00
THE DOUGLAS NOVELS. Twenty-four Volumes. Per vol.	1.00

---

---

LOTHROP, LEE & SHEPARD CO.  
BOSTON









HELEN GRANT SAT WITH HER LETTERS IN HER LAP. — *Page 1.*



The Helen Grant Books

---

# HELEN GRANT, GRADUATE

BY

AMANDA M. DOUGLAS

Author of "Helen Grant, Senior," "Helen Grant in College,"  
"Helen Grant's School Days," "In the King's Country,"  
"In Trust," "Larry," "The Kathie Stories,"  
"Almost as Good as a Boy," etc.

*ILLUSTRATED BY AMY BROOKS*

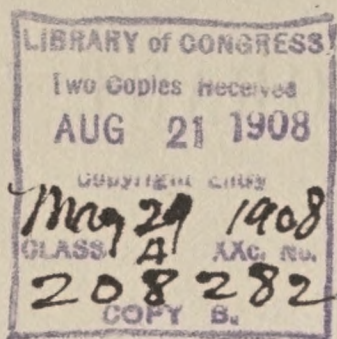


BOSTON  
LOTHROP, LEE & SHEPARD CO.



Published, August, 1908

PZ7  
D746Hgl



COPYRIGHT, 1908, BY LOTHROP, LEE & SHEPARD Co.

*All Rights Reserved*

HELEN GRANT, GRADUATE



Norwood Press  
BERWICK AND SMITH CO.  
Norwood, Mass.  
U. S. A.



# Contents

CHAPTER	PAGE
I. A HOUSE-PARTY . . . . .	I
II. ILLUSIVE DAYS OF YOUTH . . . . .	25
III. A WORLD EVER NEW . . . . .	49
IV. HEARTS THAT SEEM TO DIFFER . . . . .	67
V. A RARE HOLIDAY . . . . .	90
VI. FOOD FOR CONSIDERATION . . . . .	116
VII. IN THE HEART OF THINGS . . . . .	139
VIII. THE DELIGHT OF RETURNING . . . . .	167
IX. FRIENDS OLD AND NEW . . . . .	191
X. A CHANGE IN PROFESSORS . . . . .	217
XI. A NEW WOMAN . . . . .	241
XII. A SPRIG OF HEARTSEASE . . . . .	266
XIII. THE LAW OF LOVE . . . . .	293
XIV. A CONFIDENCE . . . . .	315
XV. AT THE GATE OF THE FUTURE . . . . .	335
XVI. JUST AMONG GIRLS . . . . .	359
XVII. HELEN GRANT'S DECISION . . . . .	380







## Illustrations

HELEN GRANT SAT WITH HER LETTERS IN HER LAP ( <i>Page 1</i> ) . . . . .	<i>Frontispiece</i>
	FACING PAGE
GIRLS IN THE AIRIEST OF SUMMER WHITENESS	102 ✓
SHE FLUNG HERSELF ON THE GRASS, CLASPING HELEN'S KNEES . . . . .	134 ✓
"OH, IT SEEMS GOOD TO GET BACK!" . . . . .	168 ✓
TWO ARMS WERE FLUNG ABOUT HER NECK . . . . .	192 ✓
HELEN TOOK THE FADED WREATH OUT OF HER HAIR . . . . .	352 ✓







# Helen Grant, Graduate

## CHAPTER I

### A HOUSE-PARTY

HELEN GRANT sat on the spacious piazza with her letters in her lap, but she was lost in what her eyes saw, and her thoughts followed their exhilarating scenes unconsciously. It was such a magnificent summer morning, with a pale blue sky and an atmosphere full of golden quivers, except where the cluster of trees gave it iridescent tints. Birds were singing everywhere from very gladness, flowers were nodding to each other, shaking out wafts of fragrance. It was a day that penetrated one's farthest pulse and made it a delight to live.

Out on the lawn in the shade of a great clump of *Philadelphus* that made a bridal bower, were the twins and Shirley Chardavoyne, who was telling them amusing stories,



which she illustrated with her pretty hands. How they laughed! They had been captivated by her, not that they in any wise neglected their first love. Elma was puzzled to know how you could love so many people.

There was a light step beside her and Miss Craven paused in her delicate fashion.

"Oh, sit down here! I have so much to talk over," Helen began impetuously. "Here are three—shall I call them golden opportunities?"

"That depends. They are of no base metal I judge, by your face."

"I shall not have to go begging to earn my bread," laughed Helen with gayety. "Here are two chances. A lovely letter from Mrs. Aldred tells me that if I have nothing better in view she would be very glad to have me. Her teacher of mathematics and chemistry is to be married. So you see teachers *do* marry," with an arch little nod, "and I registered in the bureau. A girl's seminary at Cleveland sends me an offer, another from some town in Kentucky, a very high-up establishment that takes only college graduates for assistants. This is for literature and history."



"The embarrassment of riches, certainly."

"And a letter from my dear dry Professor Blake, of whom the girls all stand so in awe. He didn't quite approve of my registering. He is rather sorry that I skipped a year—and it was his own proposal, too. And he advises me to return for a postgraduate course. To be sure there are many things yet to learn. It is such a kindly letter. Read it," and Helen handed it to her friend.

"It is delightful, fatherly, one might say. And I think the advice is excellent. I shall endorse it. And—if you can't afford it——"

"Oh, if there was any need I should come to you, believe that," and Helen gave her friend's hand a warm clasp. "I had enough for the four years, and the last year's money has been on interest all the time. And my dear Mr. Walters sent me a check for another hundred dollars, insisting that I had earned it. His book has been a success and has gone into several theological schools. I wish father could know that! And I *do* love the college life. Then, to have eight hundred a year and my board—and Mrs. Aldred——" Helen's voice lingered over the



name as her eyes took on a tender light. "Yes, I should really like to go to her."

"But it is so different now. You would not be so happy. All the old girls are gone. Miss Grace is married, the artist daughter has set up a studio in New York. I think Mrs. Aldred sighs for the old life, though she has more applications than she can admit. And she is training one charming young girl to fill a daughter's place."

"That was my ideal life—a girl's school. I used to dream over it. It is more homelike than a college in certain ways, at least she makes it so. And to watch the growth and unfolding of girls—to help them on to right views of womanhood. You have more years with them."

"You do not have to decide this morning."

"Oh, no," with a relieved but humorous smile.

"I am for a return to college, although I could visit you at Mrs. Aldred's. You see I am thinking of my own pleasure. I don't want you to go out West. Do you have to answer any of these? For we must go down to the station presently."



"I'll think them all over. But Professor Blake's comes very near my heart. Leslie and Lorraine will both be there, and I can come to you. Oh, look at those children!"

They were both hugging Shirley in a most extravagant fashion.

"And you are not a bit jealous?" Helen studied her friend inquiringly.

"Why—no. I think the children have been almost too exclusive, but then they have each other, and they are truly twins. It is such an interest to watch their growth and development. I wish their father could see them. Yet I sometimes think if he had lived they would not be as happy. Now they seem to have him back again. He is all theirs. Their stepmother has gone out of their lives completely."

"Life is a rather curious thing, isn't it?" began Helen in a tone of retrospect. "And you do take in more people all the time with no neglect of the older friends, the real friends," coloring warmly.

"It is the natural broadening out, I believe, our duty in a certain way; the not living to



one's self alone. I think now and then of poor old uncle in his hermit life, caring for nothing but to add to his hoard, and for what? That I might spend it," and she laughed from a sense of the incongruity. "But I sometimes think of poor mother," and her eyes saddened.

Helen gathered up her letters. Lorraine and Leslie were to come together, as Leslie had been visiting at the Denmans'. Shirley preferred to stay with the children. She seemed in her element.

"Little girls are such a new thing to me," she said apologetically. "And they are so quaint, so loving, so appreciative of everything. I've been with grown-up people mostly. Sister never cared for company, she had her lover. I'm too old to be so childish, I suppose, but I do enjoy it."

She told such droll stories about the negroes, mimicking their broad drawl and their use of long words until the children were convulsed with laughter.

So Juliet and her friend drove away. There was a breeze that showered fragrance everywhere and tempered the heat. Yes, there were



the girls being assisted out by the conductor and greeted with a warm welcome.

"Are we the first?" asked Leslie.

"Yes. We wanted you to get over the feeling of homesickness and be your own true selves before the others came," Helen said mischievously.

"Homesickness! Well, that is good!" cried Leslie. "It could apply to me, however, though I've one of the dearest brothers in the world. But I feel sometimes as if the college was my true home. Think of the delight of another year!"

Helen knew she would be insistent on her returning when she heard what Professor Blake had said.

"Oh, how beautiful!" exclaimed Lorraine. "Leslie said I would fall in love with every inch of the ground."

"But the world is so full of beauty. Fortunately one person cannot keep it all," returned Juliet.

"Oh, there is Shirley! And the two little angels! Why, they are almost as large as she is!"



Lorraine waved her hand. The three ran down the walk, or flew, it seemed, in their graceful lightness.

"Oh, let us walk around!" cried Leslie, and the carriage stopped. Both girls sprang out and greeted their classmate cordially. The twins were seized with a fit of shyness.

"Do you not want to go for a drive now," asked Juliet, "while the girls are getting settled? But do not be late for luncheon."

Martin took the reins then. Juliet had been driving. The four walked slowly up the winding path, full of glad questions and delight, and sat awhile on the porch to get rested, Leslie said, and detailed her enjoyable visit with the Denmans. Then the trunks came, the girls were introduced to Mrs. Howard and shown to their room, which they had elected to share together.

"Why, it is almost like a fairy story," declared Lorraine. "And a schoolgirl friendship at the beginning!"

"Helen at the beginning," returned Leslie. "Don't you remember how Miss Craven told us the story last winter, that she was strange and



had not been used to girls; awkward and ignorant, she said, but I can't imagine her being awkward. And she is so simply ladylike, not the least bit proud of her money and her lovely home. Helen Grant deserves just such a friend."

"She is the dearest girl! I want her to visit me. Mother would just go down to her. She wants to see all the girls I like."

Leslie gave a soft little sigh. For a moment she envied Miss Craven, that she could indulge in a home of her very own. Her brother's wife was sweet and kindly, but it was another's home, Leslie felt, and there stirred within her the longing implanted in every true woman's heart.

"Do you want any help?" inquired Helen. "Will you let me come and be lady's maid? We all get so used to unpacking and settling that it is almost second nature."

"Oh, we're glad to have you just to look at. And I don't know what to say about this enchanting place and your friend. I hope you *do* appreciate her, Miss Grant."

Leslie made a mock courtesy and gave a winsome smile. "Lorraine, it is your turn now."



"I am trying to recall or invent a new adjective. Leslie has used them nearly all up in the last few days. Her enthusiasm has been almost beyond bounds. Now if you find her falling at the feet of Miss Craven and clasping her knees and breaking into rhapsodies, and——"

"Wait until you have been here a week and walked and driven, and heard her play on the organ and mother those little girls. Don't you suppose she will be married some day, Helen?"

"I hope so, if we can find any one just right. She deserves the best of love."

"Can't a single woman win a good deal of love? I suppose we all do look forward to marriage and homes of our own, but she has the home and the income and the art of sharing it. And what if she should marry some one quite different——"

"I'm not sure but some woman ought to arise and do credit and honor to single blessedness, really choose it, when she could have the best opportunities," and Lorraine studied her two compeers. Then she laughed and blushed and added, "But I shouldn't be heroic enough. And I shouldn't have the fortune. Why, it would be



delightful to ask a crowd to your house and give them a grand good time! I might squeeze in four girls, but I couldn't do all the splendid things. Oh, it's nice to be rich!" and the girl sighed.

"You have been splendid not to envy her, Helen," said Leslie, gravely.

"Why—somehow I've been very happy. There have been so many in my life and so few in hers, at least at first. And she was afraid of being liked, tolerated merely for her money. Mrs. Howard understood her from the very first, and has been like a mother to her."

"She is quite worth being loved for herself. Oh, girls, there is one thing for which we can bless poverty; we are not chosen for the mere money," and Leslie gave a bright laugh.

They had been hanging up skirts in the wardrobe, laying shirt waists in the broad bureau drawers, washing off the dust of travel and making themselves presentable. Then Helen took them through the rooms and they viewed the prospect from every window.

"Oh, there's Shirley and the children!"

"Let us go down to them. Has she found



any time for verses, Helen? Such surroundings are enough to inspire one."

"She has written some for the children. I believe they are contemplating a book. She is very happy. I fancy she never had any real childhood."

Shirley was glad to join them. Helen drew out the twins in her own cordial manner, and they were quite merry when summoned to luncheon. Afterward they all returned to the shady side of the piazza, and hammocks and rocking chairs.

"Mrs. Bell comes to-morrow, and on Thursday Miss Morse and her brother," announced Miss Craven.

"And what is one (man) among so many?" exclaimed Leslie drolly.

"We are not quite seven," appended Helen laughingly.

"And where does Mr. Bell come in? And that friend of yours, Mr. Danforth? We shall never get to the end of your acquaintances, Helen. They spring up in unexpected places."

"I was truly surprised. He had been away three years and changed so much. Well, he



really is a friend of Juliet's, too. I know Mr. and Mrs. Danforth grew very fond of her."

"I think him quite a hero," explained Juliet. "He went to business when his choice would have been college, that he might help in the education of the younger children. And now his father is well settled with a comfortable salary. I am much interested to see what he will do with his life."

Helen wondered a little. Then they talked over the summer in the queer Long Island town, and the play that had been such a success. Shirley was delighted. "It's like a story," she declared. Leslie said afterward to Lorraine, "What an interesting life Helen Grant has had! And she is so simple about it all. She never makes a heroine of herself."

Leslie and Helen went to the station for Mrs. Bell, as Juliet was deep in the sorrows of a poor woman with a wayward daughter, for whom she was trying to find a country home, where she would be removed from temptation. Mrs. Bell was really delighted to meet the girls and, though she still looked delicate, declared she was much improved. Willard insisted she must



come on a fair day, as it might storm on Saturday, and he should not mind the rain.

She, too, was impressed with the beauty of Juliet's home, and she greeted Shirley with warmth and tenderness. But the twins went at once to her heart.

"It is the loveliest thing that your friend should ask us all here," she said. "There was such a crowd and confusion at Commencement, yet how really delightful it was! You girls do have such good times," and she sighed softly for the girl who was not, whose youth had been blighted by her own hand.

They had a most enjoyable evening. Juliet played on the organ awhile, and then they all sang. Girls were fascinating studies, and she was glad to keep her love for them. Would she be too old when the little grandchildren were growing up? Motherhood was still sweet to her, she had not put it by with the marriage of her daughters. Helen had come very close to her heart, she longed even now to have some real claim upon her, and yet she felt that the girl was growing beyond her and was brimming over with youthful activities. The other



girls were charming. Miss Chardavoyne was piquant in an innocent, almost childish way that went to the heart that had lost two of its treasures. Her frankness was different from Helen's. Perhaps it was experience. After all Helen had a good deal of varied experience, if she had lived in a little old-fashioned country town.

Then Mr. Morse and his sister were added to the party.

Mr. Morse was surprised at the beauty and luxuriance of the place and the simplicity of its mistress. The whole small town was a picture of refined beauty, such as wealth and culture and family pride bring about in several generations. And Miss Craven fitted admirably in the place as if she might have been born to it. Mrs. Howard had been a most excellent mentor, but from some unknown source the girl had inherited a love of fine adjustment when she had come to develop self-possession and accept the training so cordially.

"You are to be envied, Miss Grant, in possessing such a friend," he said to Helen. "In youth one seldom thinks of making people hap-



py in their way. We are apt to imagine what is our choice has some superlative excellence, and want to fit others into the same measure."

"Perhaps it is best not to have any measure," she returned archly.

"Or a very elastic one. And maybe that would not always bring about the best results."

"I dare say you have tried a good many."

There was a dancing light in her eyes as if she was half in fun.

"Yes, a clergyman has to. Truth and justice must always be the same, but there are many minor virtues and ways that one has to adjust according to circumstances. I learned pretty soon that all souls cannot be saved in the same fashion, while the fundamental truths do not vary. Being all things to all men need not savor of insincerity. But we must not start out on theology this glorious afternoon. Your friends want you, I think."

Juliet held up some letters. Helen crossed over to her at the same instant the bevy of girls approached, as they had settled upon a walk in the strip of woods that was shady and fragrant.



"A note from Mr. Danforth, a really charming letter, I might say, and he finds that he can come to-morrow. Then our party will be complete, as Mr. Bell arrives at noon."

It was something more than a mere acceptance. He was delighted to be asked to join the party. They had talked over the old summer at the Travis house, and Mrs. Osborne had told him so much about her and Miss Grant that it hardly seemed as if three years had elapsed since that very good time. She could not have shown him a greater favor and she must accept his warmest thanks for it. He could not name his train, so she need give herself no uneasiness; he would be sure to find them.

"Come—we are going over to the woods," exclaimed Miss Morse, beckoning. "Do not refuse. How can you?"

"We simply can't," returned Helen.

"Are the woods truly yours?" asked Mr. Morse.

"Yes. They were not mine at first, but I wanted them so very much that I indulged my extravagant tastes. They have afforded us all a great pleasure."



"Oh, do you remember the wish of the poet Horace that Mæcenus gratified afterward? After enumerating all the charms of the piece of ground 'not very large,' he prayed that 'a patch be found of growing wood.' I am glad you included it in your desire," said Mr. Morse.

"As a child I roamed about woods for my pastime. I have always loved them. There are some such fine trees here. There was a little trickle of water under this rock, so I had it deepened and widened. Sometimes it almost dries up in spite of my efforts; but it fills again in a rainy time."

"There is a hidden spring somewhere."

"Half a mile above there is a little creek, and I fancy it must be a spur of that gone astray."

"It's just lovely enough for an inspiration," declared Shirley. "And see here—two pale little wild roses. Oh, you dears! You must have strayed off from somewhere."

"Wild roses seem a part of June."

"Yet I have found them in September," said Miss Craven. "But the most beautiful ones are tinted by the summer sun. There are a great



many attractive wild flowers about here. So many large estates have been kept intact and the growths followed out their own sweet will."

It was a really beautiful nook, like a painting. Some great trees overhead, chestnut, maple, a stout black walnut and a group of slender white birches. Patches of moss, some with bits of red bloom hardly as large as a pin's head, half-dried grasses and some ferns with soft green fronds. Miss Craven had assisted nature and there were groups of wild flowers that spindled a little, yet grew in the shade. Crickets ran about and hid under a leaf, chipmunks glanced curiously at them from the limb of a tree, and now and then a glorious trill from a bird made them glance at each other.

The gardener had built two rustic seats—Miss Craven sometimes came here with a book, at other times just to listen and dream, and wonder how it was that God had sent all these lovely things to her, and pitied her poor old uncle who had shut up his ears and his soul in darkness.

"Which way to the creek?" asked Mr. Morse.



"A long distance round by the road, but if you can all climb a fence——" laughingly.

The girls declared that would be the greatest fun of all.

"I suppose we can come back to the woody nook whenever we like. You are sure it won't vanish?"

"The trees couldn't," said Elma. "They are tied way down in the ground. But the pond does sometimes."

Shirley laughed and squeezed the child's hand.

"Will the princess of the wood lead the way?" and Mr. Morse bowed inquiringly.

"I really hate to leave it," whispered Leslie. "It is just the place for a confidence," but they followed on.

There was a very narrow cleared path through reaches of sweet fern that gave out its peculiar fragrance, mingled with pine and cedars. It wound about picturesquely, yet gained a little toward the North. They came to an old-time post and rail fence, almost covered with Virginia creeper and clematis.

"Oh, that isn't much!" and Shirley vaulted



over it with a light spring before a hand could be outstretched. The others had a merry time, though you could step decorously on some stones and add a sort of grace to the endeavor.

The woodland had been thinned out here and cultivated fields began to show. A sloping hillside, which was a peach orchard, then a stretch of cornfields glittering in the sun. At a distance a country farmhouse, a pasture field with cows grazing. They kept on rather northerly, crossed a stubble field, another with wild parsley just coming into bloom, with here and there a clump of field poppies and a few lilies.

"It's just beautiful!" declared Lorraine. "And look at that magnificent oak!"

It was a giant of the forest, and standing alone had grown into a perfect shape. A few steps beyond was the creek, bordered on both sides by tall weeds and flowers.

"Then do we follow this until we come to the end? Does it lose itself into some hurrying rushing river?"

"It doesn't rush much anywhere, but does find a larger stream. The people over there," inclining her head toward the farmhouse,



“have led it down to their place. There is a small pond that supplies the cattle and is useful in various ways. They have quite a dairy. Now here is a bridge. Then we will climb the hill and you shall see some of the kingdoms of the world.”

The bridge was simply hewn timbers laid across. Mr. Morse made a pretense of helping them over. Then they climbed the hill and could see for miles around, the air was so clear. Stately and beautiful residences, with spacious grounds, winding, well-kept roads, at a distance the broad river. What a picture it was, well worth going to see.

“All up above us for miles it is farming country, and down below fine residential sections, with summer palaces for some of the rich, and charming homes where people live all the year round.”

The girls were full of enthusiasm. Mr. Morse thought of his common work-a-day parish, with its ugly shops and factories, and gave a sigh.

They went home round by the road that was lined with trees and a trodden path through



the grassy sidewalk, giving it a rural aspect. Then a few modern houses, set in acres of ground, almost embowered by trees. And at last, home.

"It has been splendid!" they all declared.

Mrs. Bell and Mrs. Howard sat on the wide porch in rocking chairs. They had spent a delightful afternoon, in social talk.

The next day Helen and Leslie drove down for Willard Bell, and Leslie said, laughingly, that "Mr. Morse had been there two days and still lived. But no doubt he would be glad of a companion in adversity."

"Oh, do you call it that—or is it *his* term?" gayly, with a lurking sense of amusement.

"Oh, we haven't really dared to say it, lest he should take umbrage and disappear."

"I give you fair warning that I shall stay my time out. No unkind treatment on your part shall deter me."

"You are a brave man," returned Leslie. "Of course Mr. Morse is used to womankind, as they are generally the majority in any church."

Willard had a warm welcome, not only from



his hostess, but from his mother and the other guests. They had a merry afternoon without going anywhere.

"Martin had better drive down and meet the five train. There will be no other until seven. And it is such a long walk," Juliet said.

But he came back without the guest. There was dinner and the children were so tired they begged to go to bed.

"I'd as lief try it again," Martin said. "Would some of the ladies take a moonlight ride?"

Willard was much engrossed with his mother and Shirley. Mr. Morse was entertaining the two girls. Helen thought she would hardly be missed and slipped her hand in Juliet's.

Yes, there was the bright, eager young fellow, looking up and down the platform and glad enough of the friendly welcome.



## CHAPTER II

### ILLUSIVE DAYS OF YOUTH

MR. MORSE was playing George Herbert's beautiful old hymn

"Sweet day so fair, so calm and bright,"

as they came down in the morning. It was indeed a morn to inspire one to thanksgiving. A happy party they were in the freshness of well-used youth, quite complete now.

There was a discussion about churches. Miss Craven had affiliated with the Episcopalian, partly from a very sincere love of the service that touched her innermost soul, partly because she had found a work to do that suited her. It had been Mr. Gartney's faith and his children would grow up in it.

The other church was older by half a century, the congregations about evenly divided, though many of the older families were members of Bethany Church.



"Why not all accompany Miss Craven this morning, if she will be kind enough to make room for such a crowd, then take Bethany in the evening?"

Mr. Morse glanced around the table.

"That is a happy solution," replied Miss Craven. "I shall be proud of my addition to the congregation. But you must all act your own pleasure."

"I wish Mr. Morse was going to preach this evening," Gordon said in an undertone to them. "I like his looks. And his voice has such a true ring to it."

"He preaches a thoroughly good sermon."

"Oh, then you have heard him?"

"Yes, at our own little Hope. He has a relative, an old and retired clergyman, living there and he was on a visit."

"I'm interested in the younger clergyman just now. I can't tell you how glad I am to meet him. And your Miss Craven has developed into a lovely and gracious woman. She is just the one to have a splendid home and a fortune. They don't always get to the person who can make a wise and generous use of them.



Mrs. Osborne is just full of admiration about her, and you can't think how glad I am to be here. Oh, what a good long talk we shall have, several of them, to make up for the three years!"

The two carriages were filled, and the lady whose pew was just in front of Miss Craven's cordially invited them in. It was a very pretty edifice, with soft-toned windows and very delicate workmanship everywhere, which showed the taste and the design of a reverent heart and hand. The service, too, had the effect of devotion and earnest simplicity. Juliet had Mr. Morse in the end of her pew, but she found him quite conversant with the service. Willard sat between his mother and Shirley, and the other girls gave the latest comer to Helen, by common consent it seemed.

The short sermon was certainly excellent, the singing devotional. Afterward, as they were waiting for the carriages, Mr. Durand came down to greet his parishioner and was introduced to the guests.

"I enjoyed it all very much," said Mr. Morse. "And since we are all striving for the same end



I do not see why we should not be more tolerant of each other's modes of worship. We should learn to recognize the good everywhere."

"It is a beautiful service," remarked his sister, "and it does go to one's heart when it is reverent and devout. I cannot bear flippancy or haste in religious worship."

"Mr. Durand is quite a newcomer. The other clergyman went away in the spring. I think I enjoy the change," and she gave a soft smile.

"I wish Mr. Morse could preach this evening," said Leslie. "I like him very much. And I think he would suit the day and this lovely place."

"It's strange that I should have heard him at Hope," appended Helen. "And he preaches just as you would expect him to. I liked him immensely."

The children went to Sunday-school in the afternoon with Mrs. Howard. Gordon and Mr. Morse strayed off in the fragrant shrubbery; Willard took possession of Helen, and the others sat on the capacious porch, where rugs



were laid down and rocking chairs were inviting.

"I suppose," he said, after a while of silence, "that you are through with the pursuit of knowledge."

"Oh, no indeed!" she answered, quickly. "I'm not quite sure that I'm through with college even."

"Why, what now?" and there was surprise in his eyes as well as his voice.

"I am considering whether I shall go out and breast the cold and cruel world or spend another year in the cloistered shades," she answered with a light laugh. "I can have my choice."

"I don't understand. Or are you trying to puzzle me?"

"I have been advised by one of the professors, who has taken a great interest in me, to stay for the postgraduate course, with some specialty for my aim. I can do this. I was very proud to skip a year, but there are many things I know only a little about. I love thoroughness."

He had always understood that, yet she had



a very joyous side to her nature as well. But the sort of hardness shut him out at times, made a barrier between them that seemed to hold him so far away. He ought to come nearer to the woman he should choose for his wife.

"And I have had two offers to go away, to the West, to teach. That was my girl's ideal."

"The ideal of most girls seems to be love and marriage and a home. Is your Miss Morse, who, by the way, is very attractive, so enamoured of teaching that she would refuse a pleasant home and a good husband? Her little home episode last winter was charming."

"I do not think she would if she sincerely loved the man. You see—or perhaps you do not—that life is different from what it used to be decades ago. Then a woman had but one outlook. Now there are so many really grand things; knowledge, friendships with girls and women on higher planes, mental riches spread out on every side, and she wants her share of them. She is willing to work for them."

He kicked hard at a pebble and dislodged it. He felt cross, he knew he was crosser than



was necessary, because he had to justify himself to himself as well as to her.

"And so college spoils girls for marriage; that is the truth," he said with a touch of sarcasm.

"It trains some of them to look at it in its true light, to be entered into wisely and discreetly. Think of the divorces that occur daily. Isn't it better to be certain of one's self before the final step, than to rupture the most sacred tie God has given men and women, or to live a life of dissatisfaction, jarring upon each other?"

"We didn't used to jar——" reluctantly.

"And we need not jar now."

"But—you half promised. You allowed me to think—oh, Helen, you did love me then?"

She remembered the time. Yes, she might have been happy if she had given up and married him at once—and if his father had lived. But she would always have experienced a secret dissatisfaction. Was she demanding impossibilities? Why, she had no imaginary hero. She liked Mr. Morse, but he ought to marry—oh,



if he could like Juliet and she could like him. There was no one else——

She paused suddenly. For an instant or so she studied his face. It was turned partly from her; he was watching a squirrel who sat in the fork of a limb. The lines were rather moody, not as frank as usual.

“Willard.” She must clear the atmosphere of misunderstanding.

He turned then, but did not quite meet her eyes. His expression was poorly concealed discontent.

“I’ve loved you in a way since that first summer I came to see Daisy,” she began. “I just wished I belonged in the family. I never really knew a mother’s love and my father cared only for intellect. It was a new and absorbing experience. I really longed for such a brother. Of course, I came to know how I could take my place with you all, and I tried—I truly did, but it was sisterly. Yet I made a mistake because I loved you all so much, only I knew it was not the right kind of love to offer you for what you had to give.”

“But if I had been content——” inquiringly.



"I do not think you would have been eventually. You would have looked for something I could not give. You might not have known the fine shades between giving joyously and trying hard to give of the best. I think you will understand it some day. It seems to me I have always loved you. I am not ashamed to say it," though a brilliant color swept swiftly over her face, "but it is not that kind of love."

"And you throw me over?" Down in his heart he needed some justification; his vanity was sorely hurt, yet he was secretly convinced that she was right.

"I am not going to take away the least fragment of my love. I should like us always to be friends, and your mother is so dear that it would be a great sorrow to me to have her feel that I had really hurt you. Oh no, let us come to a good honest friendship again. I do not want to give up any kindly remembrance. There have been so many sweet things and sad things. The sorrows even bind us together."

"You are a noble girl, Helen. But if sometime—well—love is a man's dream as well," insistently.



"If sometime you should come to the real love of your life," she responded bravely. "I hope you will. And that you may have a girl's whole heart in return. I think I am different from many girls. I don't know what I may come to presently—perhaps it is rather selfish, but I *am* interested in my own life and watching to see what I can make of it. Maybe it won't be a success," with a rather tremulous little laugh.

"I really should hate to have you stay——"

"A single woman?" filling in his little pause. "If it is so ordained——" and now she laughed clearly. How odd that had no terrors for her.

"I think you will ordain it yourself," he was honest enough to answer.

"I am so glad to have your mother here," she began, as they were dropping into silence. "She seems really charmed with the twins and Shirley, who is another winsome child."

"Yes, poor dear mother. She misses father so much, though she doesn't complain. What a happy life they had! Marjorie makes a very pleasant home for her. But she is so fond of young girls. It was delightful in Miss Craven



to ask her here with you all. I suppose elderly people do sometimes get pushed aside."

"I am afraid that is the trend of to-day. You see, having no mother of my own, other mothers are dear to me, real mothers, and they do not always need to be mothers of your own descent."

Would his mother feel very much disappointed if he gave her a different daughter? Yes, it was odd how they had all settled to the fact, even his sisters. Yet, if Helen had decided, he was not to blame. And down in his heart he was convinced now that she was right. Why was it that he did not care so much for his own way now? Was it truly a boyish fancy? A man could not hang after a woman forever and argue her into marrying him!

"Do you think you *will* go away? Didn't you say something about the cold and cruel world?" laughing boyishly.

"It hasn't been that to me so far, so I maligned it. I am afraid matters have gone too easy with me. Just when I thought I had reached the edge of the desert green and smiling fields have opened before me. After all I



have had a great many of the good things of life," in a buoyant tone.

"And you do not count me among them," he said, with a little irritation. It gave him a pang to think she could be happy and joyous, satisfied even without him.

"Yes, I do." She turned and faced him. "I shall never forget my first visit to Daisy. And our studying Greek together, our walks and the delightful home! I was so happy with you all. Indeed, I can never count you out of those joyous times, and of the times we have kept sorrow together."

"Oh, thank you!" There was a tremor in his voice. One moment he was full of passionate grief with a consciousness of loss deeper than she could understand, he said to himself; yet the next, thrilled with a sense of freedom, as if he had really worn a fetter that had dropped off without any effort on his part. Yes, his conscience was clear. She had snapped the chain.

Would he always revert to the old thought, she wondered. Must she be justifying herself every time they met?



Just then they turned out of the "larch path," as it was called, where the larches hung out their tassels and danced to every breeze, displaying the tiny cones of last year. Some birds sung in the branches, yes, they were Sunday hymns of gladness.

Two figures were coming in the narrow path that crossed this. Her face glowed with a sudden light. It was merely a sense of relief, but he did not take it that way.

Mr. Morse spoke first, just two words, but there was a peculiar smile to accent them.

"Which way?"

"Around this way home. It is the shortest," said Helen, trying to appear at ease.

Gordon Danforth was grave almost to absent-mindedness. Willard gave him a casual glance. Mr. Morse came around the other side of Helen. Willard recalled the fact that he had been jealous of the clergyman; he was not so now, and when he said to himself in that wordless way, "of course, he will marry her; she was and is meant for a clergyman's wife," it did not even give him a pang.

"What a heavenly day! A day on which to



march 'nearer home.' One can imagine it Elim."

"With its seventy palms and wells of water," appended Gordon. "That verse is a great favorite of my father's. I think I have heard him preach a dozen sermons on it, all of them different."

"I must try it myself," said Mr. Morse, thoughtfully. "I suppose we all could find some Elims in our lives, though we do not always feel the need of them in youth."

There was a silence, if it could be called that, with the musical rustle of the leaves and the tuneful bird voices, and as they followed the path now beginning to be bordered with bloom there were other cheerful sounds. Under the great weeping willow that looked like a fringed tent the rest of the household had gathered. What a charming group they made!

So they paused and chatted until Juliet suggested it must be near suppertime. She hoped some of them would not be too tired to go to church to-night. Dr. Burgess was a really fine preacher.



"You may count on me," assented Mr. Morse.

Gordon nodded. "Both of us," cried Leslie, holding her friend's hand.

"Enough to be impartial," said Miss Craven. "And the evening will be magnificent. It is nearly full moon."

"We can walk that far, surely," said Mr. Morse. "I passed the church yesterday. It has a kind of gravity and strength. And I liked the burying-ground beside it. The old part is over a hundred years in age."

"Yes, that is the lecture-room. The church proper was built over fifty years ago, when this was all farms, and it was the only church for miles around."

"And the stone parsonage is in keeping. There is no pretentious newness about it."

"Oh, did you meet Dr. Burgess?" Juliet asked.

"No," with a smile of humor. "I'm out on a holiday. I skulked. I did not want to be asked to preach. But I shall give myself the pleasure of calling on Dr. Burgess to-morrow."

"I wish you were going to preach this even-



ing," Gordon said, in a low aside. "I have promised to be home next Sunday."

"I hope our acquaintance isn't going to end with these few days," returned Mr. Morse, in a heartfelt tone.

Gordon smiled gratefully. He had found a delightful friend this afternoon, an excellent adviser as well.

They all walked toward the house. Helen went around to Mrs. Bell's side, and the elder woman slipped the girl's hand in her arm.

"What a lovely home your friend makes," she said, admiringly. "I don't wonder you are happy at college with such girls. Do you know that Miss Brooks is a most charming and sensible girl, measured by the old-fashioned standard? All you girls have new standards; it is right enough, too. In my young days we thought many of our elders old-fashioned. I once knew a young clergyman,—well, why shouldn't I confess it, I was half in love with him, a girl's unformed fancy. Then I believed the life so superior—well, I think so still, only the men are not always superior. Then I met Mr. Bell and the love came of itself, and I



knew the other was only a fancy. It was odd, but I began to find flaws in my admirer and to compare him with Mr. Bell. After I was engaged this young man began to wait on the squire's daughter. They were the richest people about, but she was not meant for a clergyman's wife. I thought he ought to see it. I had heard him talk a little about—well, I suppose it was his ideal, and she was not at all like it. It wasn't a wise marriage, but when I contrast his narrow, opinionated ways with Mr. Hollis's broad, generous beliefs and earnest work, I think how much even the ideas of religion have changed; many of them for the better."

"But if you had married him——" suggested Helen, archly.

"I do not think I could have. I should have seen many things I could not thoroughly like. Besides, I fell in love with Mr. Bell, and that ended all vague wandering fancies. And to-day girls' ideals may be different again. I dare say I shall seem old-fashioned to my grandchildren. Some of the new modes of thought are not at all satisfactory to me, but they may be



shaped into grand truths presently. And your Miss Brooks seems a union of the old and the new. I can understand how you two are such excellent friends. If I were going to choose a destiny for her I should say she would make an admirable clergyman's wife. And I do believe the wife has more to do with her husband's success than people are willing to admit. She should make religion beautiful. It is glad tidings everywhere."

"And Lorraine, what shall happen to her?" asked Helen, with a bright upward look.

"Oh, I am not a soothsayer," smiling. "She is of the newer type and ought to have a happy life. I think she would pine away in any unappreciated sphere. But all three of the girls are charming. And I am so interested in Miss Craven's life. I seem now to have nothing much to do but watch and enjoy the happiness of others. I wonder if I shall make a gossipy old woman? There is no one to check me now, if I do get over-critical."

"Oh, you never will," decisively rejoined Helen, quickly.

"And I don't want to get into the habit of



saying 'the old times were better than these.' Father and I always tried to keep abreast of the present," continued Mrs. Bell.

Helen loved to hear her say "Father and I." It seemed almost as if he must be about somewhere and would join her presently.

They all thronged up the broad porch.

"We will have supper quite early if you want to walk to church, at least if you are not too tired," exclaimed Miss Craven.

"We have only been sauntering," declared Mr. Morse. "Really, Miss Craven, if envy was not one of the seven sins we might envy this lovely home. It is like some of the resting-places Pilgrim found. But he had to press on for the prize."

Afterward they discussed how many would go to church.

"I shall stay and keep Mrs. Bell company," answered Helen. "But I would like the rest of you to see the quaint old church, and you will hear an excellent sermon."

"And since it is my persuasion, I am in duty bound to go. Then, I owe it to Dr. Burgess."

Willard and Shirley had been talking and



now she joined the group entering the hall. He came and kissed his mother, and said:

"You will have Helen, so you will not be lonesome," smiling vaguely at the young girl.

"Oh, no," in a cordial tone, and the mother put her arm about Helen.

"She must know. I do want her to know," Helen's thoughts ran. If Mrs. Bell in her girlhood could have taken up a fancy that was not the real thing, would she not find some excuse for her? She had tried to love and her trying had been useless. She wanted it to end so that no one should think it possible any more. Not that she had met any one to love. She liked Mr. Morse very much, but she wanted her own life a long while yet. Miss Morse was very happy, and Juliet was not thinking of lovers. Helen imagined a possibility for her, and then she tried to put it out of her mind.

They sat in the soft light, it was almost full moon, and talked tenderly over the past, of Daisy whose death had been accepted with resignation, but the mother could not blind herself to the fact that it had been a mistaken marriage; of the other part of her life in which



there would be a reunion some day and the fervent faith that had enabled her to endure the present separation. Then of Willard, who was proving such a tender, thoughtful son and advancing in his profession.

Helen clasped both arms about her neck and laid her soft young cheek against the mother's. Her heart ached to bursting, but she must speak. She could not go on under the wrong impression.

"Oh, there is something I must confess to you, and it almost breaks my heart to do it. I do not want to forfeit your love, and if I could choose a mother from all the friends who have been so dear and sweet to me it would be you, but——" Helen's voice broke with a sound near to a sob.

"My dear," the tone was tender and the pressure warmer. "I think I know. We shall be mother and daughter if no outward tie unites us. You have come to me in Daisy's place, so there should be no vacant niche of loneliness. I hoped for the other, father and I talked of it, and I do think Willard loved you. But I have felt that you did not love him of that pure and



sacred election a wife should have. I want my son to know the fine, rare sweetness of love, just as Lawrence Hollis knows it, just as father did. It means a good deal to a man. It is his guerdon, his refuge and stay in adversity. And if a man finds later on that friendship is not the love that glorifies the marriage tie, it is a bitter awakening. Your time of loving has not yet come."

"Oh, I am so glad you understand. I have been afraid that I was to blame, that I had held out too much hope, not meaning to; but your home was such a delight to me, and I think one of the sweetest memories of my life will be the hours spent with Mr. Bell. We had so many tastes in common. He loved those simple little poems that are like wayside flowers and have a sweetness that penetrates your very soul. You see, my own father didn't care for these things and I am just full of them."

Willard was of the newer kind, his mother felt. There was not so much of the spirit of romance about him. Neither did Helen seem a romantic girl, but hidden in the depths of her soul there was a curious strain of it.



"Oh," the girl cried with a sob in her breath, "will you forgive me for any hurt I have inadvertently done? I like him so much. We could go on being friends all our lives. At least I could. Perhaps there *is* some lack in me——"

"No, my dear, you are not the two people to make a perfect marriage. There are not many perfect marriages, but you do see some. Annis's and Marjorie's are as near, I think, as ours. There really should be no earnest trying. Love should come of itself, and two people ought to have patience enough to wait a little and see. I ought to thank you for firmness and discrimination. I have been afraid you might be overpersuaded. I wanted you to know how I felt about the matter. If I had married the clergyman I spoke of, I should have been trying all my life and never have reached the highest point of content. There are so many mistakes made nowadays, and young people have not the patience to live out of them. It takes the highest and purest love. And you will still be a dear daughter to me, since the two that are gone are an indestructible link between us. And we will both hope for Willard's happiness.



He is coming to understand his own needs better."

For the mother had, through her wider experience, a more correct estimation of her son's nature, and knew he had a man's desire to be loved wholly, entirely. Much as she longed for Helen she could interpret the little reluctance on the girl's part that he would not understand. It was better for her to choose her own life. She would never give him the sort of worship that was his ideal love.



## CHAPTER III

### A WORLD EVER NEW

THE party were very enthusiastic about the church and the service. Dr. Burgess had come down the aisle to speak to them and expressed much pleasure at meeting Mr. Morse, as he had a warm welcome for a brother clergyman, since they did not often stray hitherward.

"I meant to give myself the pleasure of calling on you to-morrow," he said. "I wish you might remain over another Sunday."

That was not possible, so they must make the most of the few days remaining.

Willard did not look at all down-hearted, but instead in a glow of enjoyment. Shirley went straight over to his mother and kissed her.

"It was such a delightful walk there and back," she began with shining eyes. "Kingsland Manor is beautiful from end to end. But so are a great many places in the world. Only



you enjoy them more when you are with friends."

She was very happy, giving out brightness at every turn, a delicious if imperfect wisdom.

"Can't we have a good sing?" asked Mr. Morse. "I feel just in the humor."

Miss Craven played on the organ, a very sweet-toned one, not too loud for the room. Mr. Morse had a fine clear voice and Gordon's was inspiring with the sound of youthful devotion. Willard joined in, and they made a concourse of sweet sounds.

"What a day it has been!" Gordon said with his good-night to Helen. "A Sunday indeed! And I have so much to tell you. Every day adds to it," laughing with a glow of satisfaction in his eyes. "Three years of arrears to make up."

Mr. Morse stood talking to Juliet as if loth to go. What if *that* were to happen! Helen did not give any real shape to her thought and then colored vividly over it.

But somehow her heart was lighter. If Mrs. Bell had seen that she and Willard were not



really meant for each other, it must be so, and she did not need to question her conscience any further. As she had said more than once, she was not a worshipful girl, she liked to give of her own free will, not from another's expectation. Perhaps she was a little hard and had something of her father's nature.

"But I *like* so many people. I see so many attractive qualities in those I come in contact with. And when others like you, you must give something back," she mused.

She fell asleep in quite a happy frame of mind, and when she awoke the east was all aflame with glory. The two L's, as she had re-christened them, were asleep. She stole softly downstairs. One of the maids had been sweeping off the porch and gave her a pleasant "Good-morning."

Something was curled up in the big rocker. It did not seem quite like Gyp, the handsome collie. She came nearer and a golden head was raised, but the face flushed in vivid scarlet.

"Why, Shirley!"

Shirley laughed in a confused sort of way.

"I was so wide awake that I wanted to come



out and enjoy the glorious morning. I did not suppose any one but the maids would be up."

"Oh, yes; just as I slipped down Mr. Morse was going out to the street."

"So I come third on the list!"

Shirley stretched herself out. She had a tiny pad in one hand and her pencil fell to the floor.

Helen rarely teased. She walked over and gathered a spray of honeysuckle, fastened it at her throat, and by this time the younger girl had quite recovered herself.

"It is so lovely here. I think I never was so happy anywhere. I'd like to be one of the twins, for they really have a claim of love on Miss Craven. Then I'd like to have Mrs. Howard for my grandmother. Father's mother married a Frenchman, and they live on the outskirts of Paris somewhere. He is her second husband. Father did not approve of it, nor like him, so we scarcely ever hear of them. She sent Eloise a beautiful gown, but she was not married in it. And you can't think how alone I feel, for all of the home ideas are so different from mine. But I suppose being mar-



ried does make a difference. I've been dreaming a little romance, Miss Grant. Suppose Mr. Morse should fall in love with your friend, Miss Craven! He is splendid! And I think I shall never feel afraid of Miss Morse again, she was so delightful at Christmas. Of course teachers can't help being a little severe on backward and careless students, but when you know *they* are right and you have been at fault! I began about your Miss Craven. How dearly she loves you. I couldn't fill any such place with anybody, so you see I never could envy you, but if I had been older sister to the twins! Did you ever want to be some one else, Miss Grant?"

Helen laughed. "Not exactly some one else, but to be set in some one's place."

"Perhaps that is what I mean," thoughtfully. "Where you are loved and appreciated. What was that pretty Daisy like that Mr. Bell is so fond of? He said you were very dear friends."

"Yes. We were warm school friends. She was charming. All the girls in school were fond of her. She had a peculiar gift of attraction."



"But everybody likes *you*," Shirley said simply and without envy.

The twins came gliding downstairs. Gay as they had grown, they were never noisy or intrusive. Shirley held out her hands and they both came to her, nodding and wishing Helen "Good-morning." Juliet joined the group, and just then Mr. Morse turned into the winding path. Helen smiled a little to herself. Shirley had voiced a thought that had crossed her mind. Juliet would make an admirable clergyman's wife.

And then they all seemed to assemble on the porch with cordial greetings.

"I wonder if you would like a turn at lawn tennis this morning?" the hostess asked. "I have the offer of my neighbors' court. They are two charming elderly women who have brought up five orphaned children of their brothers, who are all settled and away now, and they were very sorry to be absent at this time, but they went to a sister who was ill. I shall have a court of my own, I think."

"I shall be at any one's service," exclaimed Mr. Morse, smilingly.



"Count us in," responded Willard. "And the girls—excuse me, the ladies!" bowing.

"We're going to be girls for a long while yet," Helen said with spirited laughter. "We don't have to carry college dignity about with us. Indeed I am not sure but it is a conserver of youth. You generally hear people say 'college girls.' "

"Your friends must miss their youthful family," Mrs. Bell said to Juliet. "And yet it is the natural order of things. They make new centres of interest. I could not have lived alone, but there are two of them. Still it is lonely. They should have been imbued with your idea and had some others growing up."

"The second girl married after we came here and the single son went to South America. It seemed a pity that the niece could not have stayed on in the lovely home. I think they were disappointed."

The summons to breakfast made a pleasant confusion. There was an amusing chat about the table, some delightful music afterward. Then they strolled over to the courts, which were sheltered from the morning sun by some



magnificent old chestnut trees, with here and there a tulip poplar.

The house was of the old Colonial style, with an abundance of flower beds about, in which one found the old-fashioned blossoms and rows of spice pinks that made the air sweet. Great masses of hollyhocks stood up like sentinels, as if guarding the choicer flowers, and clumps of annunciation lilies wafted out their fragrance. The old gardener touched the wide brim of his straw hat to them, and Miss Craven paused to exchange a word with him, after which he brought the balls and racquets.

It was a rather merry game and Helen played her very best, to her surprise ably seconded by Willard. They were unevenly opposed by Shirley and Juliet, while on another court Mr. Morse and Leslie were having a more equal contest with Gordon Danforth and Lorraine. Shirley had taken quite an ardent interest in the game the latter part of the term. Juliet was not a practised hand at the game, but Willard made suggestions to her and they progressed very well. He was bright and joyous this morning. Had he truly understood



what was best for both, and was he making himself content?

The game was quite lengthy, but enjoyable. Shirley made a stroke that covered her with glory, and though it was a foregone conclusion that the others would win, it was only by such a small score that the defeated almost had a triumph.

"You are quite a redoubtable antagonist," admitted Mr. Morse. "It was excellently played. Miss Grant, you show some fine training. Miss Chardavoyne, that was a lucky stroke of yours."

"It was clear luck!" laughed Shirley, very happy at the praise, as she saw it delighted Willard.

"We must take a practice every morning."

"But I shall have to leave to-morrow," said Gordon, regretfully. "I made an engagement for the evening with a friend I can see no other time, who sails the next day for Europe. And I'm having such a fine time! Ah, 'how can I leave thee, Paradise?'"

"Thank you," returned Miss Craven, smilingly. "But I am very sorry."



"Shall we have another game?"

"Not now," returned Willard. "I'm tempted by the bosky dell down yonder—isn't that poetical? And I'll reward Miss Chardavoyne's good play by asking her to stroll with me."

Shirley smiled and blushed, but joined him at once. Mr. Morse was having a talk with Leslie. The others sauntered around. Lorraine took Helen's arm.

"Do you like Shirley Chardavoyne very much?" she asked, insistently.

"Why—yes. She has a very sweet nature and is transparently true."

"You think so?" doubtfully.

"Why, Lorraine, what has happened to make you suspicious?"

"Oh, she has Southern ways of drawing people, men, I mean, into her net. And you are blind—Helen."

"Do you mean—is it her going off with Willard?"

"She has just made herself charming to Mrs. Bell. And she looks up in that adoring fashion," Lorraine said, indignantly.

"Well?"



Helen was smiling, and Lorraine turned scarlet under the gay glance.

"He belongs to you, or ought to. He has been devoted and Mrs. Bell said you were like a daughter to her. Oh, we had a lovely talk about you and the Daisy who died, and—and I can't bear to have any one come between and spoil the romance. You know we thought at first he was Miss Craven's friend, but when he came and took you to the funeral—of course we guessed, Leslie and I, and when he is so manly, and yet really charming, I cannot have this childish little thing come in and spoil it all. There! Are you angry?" and her voice was near tears.

"Oh, my dear Lorraine, you are quite wrong. We are the best of friends. We could never be anything more. This is the sacred truth."

Lorraine's disappointment did bring tears to her eyes. She studied Helen in silence, the pain visible.

"But I am sure he could love you if you gave him a chance. I really think he does," in an assured tone.

"And what of me? I'm afraid I still think



a good deal of myself, and whether I should love him as he needs and wishes. And I am quite sure I am *not* in love. Have you discovered any of Shakespeare's signs in me? Think how his women made their election without waiting months and years."

Helen's face was alight with an arch merriment. Lorraine's did not soften from its touch of disdain.

"Oh, Lorraine dear, don't think me trifling and frivolous," and she placed her arm caressingly over the girl's shoulder. "I think if I had been born in the Bell family I should have had my ideal life. And yet I might have been altogether different. But Mr. Bell was the loveliest of fathers, on lines that appealed to me strongly." And she recalled for an instant a fateful moment of her girlhood, when she had almost yielded for his sake rather than Willard's. Of course she would have studied their happiness and made herself satisfied with it, but would it have been her supremest joy?

"I can't quite explain to you," she went on, after a pause. "We were just merry children at first. Then suddenly I outgrew him. I



seemed ever so much older. My ideals of life changed, were different from his. I could feel that. He is a fine, ambitious, pleasing fellow, a great favorite with one member of his firm, and I don't doubt but in a few years he will have an excellent income. Some day he may be a rich man. He will want a wife to adore him, to enjoy all the pleasures and lovely things he will shower upon her. He will be proud of her, but——"

She drew her face into thoughtful lines. "And that ought to satisfy any woman," protested Lorraine. "Then if a man comes up, wins fame and position, and takes his wife along with him, what more can she ask?" and there was a sort of triumph in the ending of her speech.

"We are good comrades. No one will ever crowd me out of the place I have in Mrs. Bell's heart. She understands. Do not get troubled, my dear girl, because this bit of romance will not shape itself according to your fancy."

"If it was some other girl——" regretfully.

"I think you do not give Shirley credit for some of the good qualities she possesses. She



is very truthful, constant, and has quite a correct estimate of herself without foolish vanity. Her family are old Virginia people, and you can tell by her that they are of the clean, wholesome, refined type. Why, I think it quite charming that her parents should be lovers still and enjoy intellectual pursuits without the stimulus of society. She will love deeply, tenderly, and adore her husband. He will be her very life. I was a little annoyed at first by her fondness for me. I have some beautiful verses she wrote to me and she would not allow me to offer any of them to the 'Miscellany.' She is steeped in poetry, and she isn't silly or sentimental about it. Neither is she effusive. The college contact is going to shape her ideas, to sift out the impossible and bring her more to the practical. It is a most excellent thing that she came. Though I've wondered how she came to idealize me so much. And she is the sort of girl who needs a husband strong enough to guide, and glad to accept her adoration, indeed, who will never weary of her. It will not be the silly sort, and she has a certain sensitiveness that is not really morbid."



"You love her very much?" disappointedly.

"Not in the same way that I love you. We discuss many points that she would not understand as well as she does her Greek," laughingly. "And there is something I want to tell you and Leslie, that *may* add to your store of pleasure next year. I haven't found any real opportunity, but I did lay the matter before Miss Morse. And here comes Leslie."

"What conspiracy are you hatching now?" Leslie asked, with a rather mischievous smile.

"A confidence, and we have been so full of enjoyment, walks and talks with the wrong person, but now, like the Ancient Mariner, I shall fix you with my eye until you have heard me through. I had a most delightful letter from Professor Blake, in which he advised that I should return and take a postgraduate course and be fitted for some specialty. I showed the letter to Miss Morse when she came up, and we have been discussing the pros and cons. And this morning I burned my ships, i. e., answered and declined the two positions."

"Oh, I am so glad!" Lorraine's arms were



about her neck. Helen kissed her fervently. Leslie said :

“Oh, Helen !” but the tone expressed the satisfaction.

“I shall be through next year, so I shall not so much mind the parting,” exclaimed Lorraine. “But, O dear, what am I to do then !”

“Be a charming daughter,” returned Leslie.

“We are not all to be run in the same mould, even by college regulations. Helen and I have no family duties, no indulgent father to care for us. We must e’en make our own way through life. But I am so glad, Helen.”

“I had begun to feel a little queer and lonely at trying the world among strangers, though I came a stranger here——”

“In a great colony of girls we may be sure of finding some friends. I’d like to be one of a large family. Yet you find a good many girls standing quite alone, and they have a sympathetic feeling for each other.”

“You know I told you of the two girls I met at school, who cast their lots together. I am going to visit them. One of them is having a hospital practice, and they live in a small apart-



ment. When Miss Kent is through they are going to some pretty town and set up a real home together. They are very dear friends, no relation at all. So there may be hopes for some of us poor lone lorn orphans. Anyway, there will be some work for us to do in the world."

Leslie came around the other side and slipped Helen's hand through her arm with a tender pressure.

"It is so delightful that I can't make it seem true," she said. "Another year together!"

They strolled on full of happy plans. Then in a turn of the winding path they espied Willard and Shirley and the twins, having a merry time flinging bits of Alice fun and snatches of ridiculous verse at each other.

Well, perhaps Helen would enjoy a graver partner for the long march of life. Shirley looked very pretty and beguiling, as if she might be a sister to the children; yet Lorraine could not be satisfied.

"We had better find our way back to the house," said Willard. "It wouldn't do for us to miss luncheon."

"Why, I wouldn't mind," declared Shirley,



merrily. "We could hunt through the woods for nuts and berries. We could shelter ourselves under the trees."

"But there won't be any nuts until frost comes," said Wilma.

"Well—apples, and I saw some pears not much bigger than your thumb, turning yellow."

"I had some last summer, and they were delicious," added Helen. "Green apples may be filling, if you can stand enough of them, but they are warranted to play tricks with your digestion."

"But there is grass of which some one in describing Nebuchadnezzar makes him say,

"As he ate the unwonted food,

" 'It may be very wholesome, but it isn't very good.' "

"Did he really eat grass?" and Wilma looked up at Willard.

"For seven years. Horses and cows live on it longer than that, and never find a word of fault."

Wilma seemed to puzzle over that. Then she said:

"Oh, there are a great many things that eat grass, but they are not people."



## CHAPTER IV

### HEARTS THAT SEEM TO DIFFER

THEY had a gay time at luncheon. They could have the afternoon to themselves, Miss Craven said, but she had invited in some of the neighbors and they were to have a picnic tea on the lawn. There were the hammocks and the rocking chairs and some games, but most of them fell into desultory conversations. The twins brought out the box of letters and besieged Shirley to help. Mrs. Bell and Willard joined, Lorraine went to write a letter home. Leslie and Mr. and Miss Morse had the far end of the piazza, and presently Helen and Gordon strayed down to the pretty rustic summer house.

"We have hardly seen each other only at long range," he began. "And I wanted to hear about you at first hand. Why, you are through college—and now what do you mean to do? It's odd how we cross each other's orbits, or isn't it I that make the effort? I was so glad of



that bit of Commencement. And it was so good of your friend to invite me up here. I was much surprised when I heard about her at Mrs. Osborne's, who sets her up on a pedestal. Mrs. Travis admires her so much as well. And she knows how to make a most attractive home. You seem to be fortunate in your friends. Those Wilmarths were charming people. And Mr. Morse is the sort of clergyman it does one good to meet. Then those girls—are they the flower of college life? You see,” a peculiar smile crossing his face, “I’ve been out of the world of women so long that I am afraid of turning into a universal admirer. I never saw such a happy lot of girls as you were a month ago. You must have had grand good times. And I heard that you carried off the prize in your freshman year. And then that book Mr. Morse talked about! What are you going to do with all this learning?” in a cordially amused tone. “Impart some of it, if I get an opportunity. At present I am going to take a postgraduate year, then, as I am not rich and have no especial genius, it will be teaching, I suppose.”



She looked very bright and eager, spirited as well. He wondered a little about her friend, Willard Bell.

"Will you like it—teaching, I mean?"

"Yes. It may be a bit of vanity or overweening self-appreciation, but I should like to have a hand in shaping character, in building up some of the truths of life into habits of life. That is a rather high aim when you are teaching the exact sciences and helping a weary or indifferent girl through some difficult problem. I like the work."

"You will make an excellent teacher, I am sure," and there was a pleasant commendation in his tone. "You were an honor girl, too. And skipped a class I hear."

Helen blushed and laughed. "All one's good and bad deeds are sure to come to the fore."

"Well, the good deeds ought. We are advised not to hide our light under a bushel, for it may show some weary and discouraged traveler the way. As for the bad ones—I never saw the propriety of adorning a moral with them. They are best dropped out of sight."



"I am glad to hear you say that," the girl returned, warmly.

"Not covered up by undue gratulation, mind you. A reform may be worthy of commendation, but the sin should be considered a stain and shame. One is to leave them behind and go on to the next. But isn't this rather preachy?" smiling, with a sort of humorous light. "On the whole, you liked college? I dare say you had some fun sandwiched in with the ponderous exercises!"

"Oh, yes. One couldn't always be grave in such a crowd."

"I've envied the boys at college. That was my great desire. But it was best to do what I did."

"You were brave about it. Oh, your mother appreciated it," and Helen flushed with pleasure.

"Yet, it was a real sacrifice. But there were a number of us to be educated, and the salary was not large. To be sure there is a kind of hope that a clergyman may get a better call, but he doesn't always. We had a pleasant home, and Westchester was a lovely place with its re-



finements. The two years at the Technical was all father could give me, and when the appointment came, for I had not dreamed of anything quite so lucrative, it was my duty to take it and help along. This last year has been one of prosperity for them, and father and mother are having their reward. He is just as earnest—I think more so; there are many things to combat in a large city. My brother is doing for himself now, and my sister will graduate and teach. One little brother has an excellent voice and is getting some very fine musical training in a neighboring church as a choir boy.”

“Why, I must rejoice in your good fortune,” and she smiled delightedly.

“I don’t suppose you ever had two paths stretching out before you, one seeming just what you wanted, and you knew you could reach your aim, and the other——?”

Her earnest eyes asked the question.

“I wanted to go to college and take a degree. I’ve studied as I could—sometimes having leisure days and occasionally finding a teacher. It’s odd that some college-bred men have done nothing with their education, and are laboring



at the commonest kind of work. Now, two years would give me a degree. What I lack in money I could easily make up in tutoring."

"Oh, go by all means," with a sudden burst of enthusiasm. "Every year education is more in demand."

"And the other side is that I have been offered an excellent contract that I must take for three years, and they would rather make it five. It will be a lucrative one."

He was studying her face. She simply said "Oh!" in a rather uncertain tone.

"I ought to be honest with you. Half-truths lead one on a devious track," smiling a little.

"I've always been fond of father. He doesn't make any great fuss, but he is a very thorough Christian. It used to be my dream as a boy to be a clergyman. I did really give it up. I liked my business, too. I found I had a genius for it, or I couldn't have acquired so much in two years. Now my father insists I shall follow my own bent. You girls do not understand this, perhaps, although women are taking up some part of the work. Sociology is coming largely to the fore. Money-getting is on the



other side. There never was an era when such large donations were given to charity and to education, and each year sees the conditions of laboring people harder. To get money anyhow is striking at the very foundation of our country, of honesty, honor, love of, or care of, our neighbor. Men are wanted to fight the good fight, to rescue souls and bodies from disease and death. But the money and the delights it stands for press hard upon one. Of course, we say the rich man can do a great deal with his money. I've wavered considerably. I am afraid there is a little cowardice in it. But your friend, Mr. Morse, has bolstered up some of the weak places. I've wondered a little how it would look to you?"

There was a sort of half-smile that was meant to cover the interest.

"That isn't fair, either," he continued, when she did not reply. "A young fellow who has seen both sides of the matter ought to be able to judge for himself. And yet it is human nature to wish to sift opinions. Even in the last three years I have seen a good many of the struggles between uprightness and poverty. 'It's only



noble to be good,' sang Tennyson, but it is often very difficult. And to keep trying to help one's neighbor is frequently discouraging. It is easier to make money and give it away, and believe that your duty to your neighbor is done. And to give of one's self—there is the pinch."

"Yet I think you incline to that," and she glanced up with a proud smile.

He flushed, for she had read him truly.

"You see, when I was a boy I was ready to do anything, work my way through college and then fit for the sacred ordination. It was partly influence and the example I had before me, and a very earnest wish to do some good in the world. Well, the other path seemed best. I'm not sorry I took it; don't think that. And I see more plainly than ever the need of strong, earnest work to stem the tide of materialism, to save souls, if you will. But I wonder which way I can do it best? This offer is very flattering to a young man; indeed, it doesn't often come, even if the present age is the golden one of youth. I had some ideas that were of service, saved time and labor, and the company was glad to adopt them. The five-year offer



was fine, though I felt I didn't want to be tied up that length of time. If I was, I should go on in the business. I *should* be interested, and no doubt start in making a fortune. I hope you do not despise money, Miss Grant?"

"No, I do not," Helen replied, earnestly. "It stands for much of the good that is done in the world. We need not take it for the mere selfish ease and pleasure we see about us."

"So the question is whether it shall be the fortune and what I can do to raise the little world above me, or the other life and the struggle. And I have heard of poor clergymen who would have made very good business men," with a bright gleam of humor in his eyes.

"I do not believe you would make a poor one. You could not be satisfied with it."

A quick flush of delight crossed his face.

"No. I should strive to do my best in whatever state I was called to fill. And I have a gift for talk," laughing and flushing boyishly.

He looked so strong and manly. She could guess how earnest his life would be.

"One person can hardly decide the wisest way in which another person's life shall be



spent," hesitatingly. It was a tremendous thing to take the responsibility. Yet it was odd—Mrs. Van Dorn had taken the responsibility of her life, decided it for her, and it had come to naught; then her father had done the same thing without a misgiving, and the finger of God had interposed. She had reached her aim and done it in a way she could not have dreamed of at first. *Did* God keep watch and ward over all the devious turns of life and lead one in the right way?

"Suppose I decided for the fortune. I could be a good man in this path, at least I should strive to."

He noted the sort of disappointment that passed slowly over her countenance and lent a graver look to her eyes. That answered him before she had spoken.

"Yes—if you did not lose the faith in the struggle. I think you would endeavor to hold fast to it."

"I am glad to have you give me that much credit. Yes, I think there is a way to meet the great questions of life and duty. I've thought a good deal of Hervé Riel this fortnight back



—I know the old poem all by heart. I've developed a great love for poetry," with a few notes of a tender little laugh. "I hope I haven't bored you beyond measure. I must meet some of the parties to-morrow who are urgent for an answer. And I have a very dear friend who thinks an opportunity like this hardly comes twice in a young man's life. He has been like a brother and made matters easier for me; will go on doing what he can for my advancement. He will be dreadfully disappointed if I decide against it. He has almost convinced me. Then, Mr. Morse's arguments are on the other side."

A gleam of pleasure gave a sudden sunshine to Helen's face. What a fine, trusty face it was!

Elma came flying toward the summer house.

"Oh, Mr. Danforth, Mr. Morse sent me to find you. Dr. Burgess wants to see you! Won't you let him come, Miss Helen?"

"Ask her if she will please to let me come?" he said, rather mischievously, to the child.

"Will you please, Miss Helen?"



Helen flushed warmly, and cast down her eyes.

“Why, I suppose I must. Will you take me in charge?” rising.

“We’re playing visiting with the dolls. Shirley was just going for the doctor. We’re afraid she has that menin—something in the back of her head. Oh, if you will come be the doctor?” and Elma looked up persuasively.

Helen held out her hand.

She was very grave and solemn, as befitted a serious case. Whether they should cut the beautiful hair and put ice bags on her brain, or give her a hot bath and some pills, and didn’t the doctor think the red cheeks were a sure indication of fever? Shirley’s pretty face was very serious as she bent over dolly.

Helen felt the pulse and the forehead and talked learnedly about the case. Being rolled in flannel, one of the new systems, and laid in the sun with her head covered, would be as efficacious as the hot bath. They could tell better to-morrow whether it was necessary to cut her hair. She, the doctor, would be in early in the morning, and she dropped some



sugar in a tiny glass of water; six drops to be given every hour until the fever abated.

They were so much obliged. She would be sure to come in early? They were so glad to have a lady doctor.

Helen bowed herself away, and, glancing over to the chestnut grove, decided to walk a little by herself. She wanted to think about Gordon Danforth. He would make a splendid, large-minded, rich man, and do a great deal of good. But would the high spiritual side be in it? That fine satisfaction Mr. Morse took in his life, in defending the right, in sympathizing with the weak and sorrowing and pointing out "that better way," shown more than eighteen hundred years ago, and still bearing fruits of the spirit, in all the beatitudes? Why didn't she have the courage to say so, to bear witness?

A hot flush stained her cheek. Yes, she would like him bravely to give up the money side, to stand out boldly a Christian soldier, going onward. But to meddle with a life that stood apart from hers—and if she in her enthusiasm should make a fatal mistake!

The eternal truths lie all about one's path,



shed a light everywhere if one would but look. And then she thought of a bit of the many sweet and odd things she had garnered up in her mind.

“Good tidings every day ;  
God’s messengers ride fast ;  
We do not hear one-half they say,  
There is such noise on the highway  
Where we must wait while they ride past.”

Would they fling out the good tidings as the sun was flinging out its golden rays? Even the souls lingering in the shadow could see it if they did not turn away.

Some one was approaching. To hurry off would be foolish, and yet she wanted this lovely solitude just now, away from her kind. Her brain was seething with thoughts of the future, not her own future either.

“Hello, Helen! Everybody seems to have seized on everybody else. Three men are in a solemn conclave on the porch, Miss Craven is discussing the wants and woes of the poor with mother and Mrs. Howard. Some way I think the poor don’t worry half as much about their lot as others do about them. Miss Morse and the two L’s, as you call them, are talking col-



lege. I thought you and Shirley would be together. What an odd, pretty name it is; musical, too. And her family name is so long that one hates to use it. Where is she?"

"Down under the great mulberry tree playing house with the children. No, you must not disturb them. I played physician awhile ago to a doll who had fallen ill. That is one of the household cares."

Willard laughed. "Isn't it odd how she can adapt herself to every one! The children grow wild over her. What a lovely home this is! I wish Miss Craven would adopt her. This is just the sort of life that makes her bloom like a rose. It must be awfully dull for her down there in Virginia now that her sister is married. Poor dainty little thing! She was so afraid she would not be able to enter the sophomore class. How good you were to her, Helen. And I have heard that college classes sort of disdained each other."

"That isn't true. I think they really desire to be helpful, and are seldom envious."

"She will never shine in the sterner paths of knowledge," and he gave a soft laugh. "But



she is charming in those innocent and girlish ways and has that sort of Southernny grace. And her genius! Don't you think it a real genius? Some of those little poems ought to be published. They are so musical and dainty. And it is queer that she hasn't more appreciation of them. Some girls would be filled to the brim with vanity. I have another pretty one I am going to have set to music. Sometimes she suggests Daisy to me, only Daisy *was* fond of admiration, and she seems to care only for a few."

"The girls in her class make much of her, and, though she is sweet and affable, she isn't effusive. She loves the few very dearly."

"You, for instance."

"Yes, she loves me," Helen said, simply. "There are several others she likes a good deal. But she dreads girl criticisms. They are not always kind, if they are necessary."

"I should take up the cudgels against any one who was unkind to her—I mean if I was one of the students and criticisms were unfair," he said, with unnecessary indignation.



Helen laughed. "I dare say boys chaff and score each other."

"But girls! And when one is so sweet and modest and deprecating. And she is refined and well-bred. Why, I think it cruel!"

"You can't have hundreds of girls all angels. I've scolded her a little myself."

"But yours was kindly. She knew you cared for her, loved her, really, and saved her from being dreadfully homesick and an awful failure. A girl like Shirley ought not be in college."

"I thought so at first, but she really is learning a good deal. You see, she had picked up a sort of desultory education between her parents and the governess, and there are some fine natural qualities. Your father and mother are so different, and Mr. and Mrs. Travis have their children's interest at heart. Shirley isn't neglected in the ordinary sense of the word, but there has not been much attention paid to the development of her character. She is naturally sweet and wholesome, and childhood still clings about her."



“Mother is so interested in her; I don’t see how any one can help being. And Miss Craven is so sweet to her. What delightful friends you do make, Helen. I’m not sure but you are right after all that you are formed for friendship rather than love.”

Helen compressed her lips a little, but he was not watching her. It hurt a little to have him agree so readily.

“I think you were right on many points, Helen,” he began, in a tone that really touched her. “I did not get asleep readily last night, the moon was so magnificent and the night so glorious. I was thinking of some of the things we said yesterday. I suppose I have been unjust and aggressive to you, but I have loved you very dearly, we all have. Yet if you couldn’t return it——”

“Only not in that way.” His tender and courteous manner appealed to her.

“I begin to understand that. And whatever I may do, I want us always to be friends. Do you think”—hesitatingly—“that there can be as good second loves?” There was more amity than emotion in his tone.



“When one comes to the true love of one’s life, he or she will surely know it. The others may have been fancies or friendships. And I hope you will be loved so truly some day that it will be a revelation. You deserve it, Willard. And we shall always be friends, I hope.”

“It doesn’t need any other tie to make you a daughter of the house. But I shall always cherish the love I have given you as one of the sacred blossoms of my life. And I know you will rejoice in whatever success I may have. I do not mean to lag behind in the great race and I shall make my work tell in both money and position. There may not be a star my way that I can ‘hitch to’ as the poet advises, but I mean to aim high for all that. And perseverance does crown one’s ambition oftentimes.”

There was a ring to his voice that bespoke his earnestness. She knew he would not fail. But if he stood in Gordon Danforth’s place he would not hesitate which path to take. Were not good, true, upright men needed in the world’s great army?

They went around to where the children had been playing, but they had gone up to the



house. So they walked on together, both feeling happy and tranquil. Gordon and Mr. Morse stood on the porch.

"I suppose it will be that way," Gordon's thoughts ran. "She has known him in the dear and friendly family relations and was the fond friend of the sister who died. His mother loves her like a daughter. Yes, it is natural, but he doesn't seem quite the unbiased choice of such a girl. She could make such a splendid woman. And it seems as if they were on different lines, that in the end it would dwarf her. Yet he is a fine, ambitious fellow, but it is for himself and those just about him. And—well, I wouldn't have anything to offer a girl for years to come. I know she would honor my election, and that will be a sweet remembrance if sometimes I look back with a thought of what might have been."

Just as they passed she gave him a questioning glance and he answered in the same fashion. Then she smiled.

They had a very enjoyable evening. Some of the near-by young people came in and there was much amusement over crambo verses.



Then they turned to music and with all the voices had a delightful concert.

"I am so sorry you must go," Miss Craven said to Gordon the next morning. "We have grown into the comfortable feeling of visiting which hardly comes on the first day unless with very intimate friends, though we made quite an acquaintance with your mother and one of your sisters, and I was very glad to hear of your father's good fortune. I am sure he deserved it. He was such an honest, earnest worker. I think we all have a delightful remembrance of Westchester."

He gave an answering smile. "I had a very happy boyhood there. Even the little pinches and sacrifices have a flavor about them that I am quite sure prosperity would lack. And I want to thank you for your charming hospitality and the pleasure of meeting such a happy circle, especially Miss Grant. And I have made a sincere and cordial friend of Mr. Morse, the kind of friend that I really needed. All of you have my best wishes and I shall look back to these pleasant hours with warm appreciation."



Helen had tried to make an opportunity for what she termed to herself "a nice talk," but it seemed as if everything prevented. There were callers to plan a picnic, there was an excursion to West Point, an out-of-doors tea with some recitations, and she must be in them all.

"We haven't half seen each other," she declared with frank impetuosity. "But I think—you have decided. And it is for the service of humanity rather than self. I honor you for it."

She held out her hand. He clasped it with an ardor that did thrill her.

"Yes—it is the work in the vineyard, if I am among those esteemed worthy. Give me your best wishes and your prayers. But I hope we shall meet somewhere again, and that you will have the life that brings you the best happiness."

She colored a little. "I want a useful life," she made answer.

He recalled the old summer and his boyishly indiscreet remark about corresponding. He longed to ask her if the reason for refusal had not ceased to hold good now, but there might



be a graver one. He would hear about her through Mr. Morse.

"I can echo that wish," he returned, gravely. "And somewhere we shall meet again just as we have now, and talk over the intervening time and recount our progress, for I hope it will be that. We must try to march steadily onward like good soldiers."

Mr. Morse drove him down to the station. Was she a little disappointed? Helen wondered. She ought to be glad to find him so manly, so interested in the larger things of life.



## CHAPTER V

### A RARE HOLIDAY

A GAY party took the sail up to West Point. Mr. Morse had a friend who was to graduate, another who was to pass into his second year. A Miss Dawson's brother was to finish his course in another year. So they would not be without hosts. Miss Dawson was to go up to the grand review and the hop a week later.

The day was perfect, the shower of the night before having cooled the air. Helen thought of the journey with the Bells in the summer that seemed almost as if in another life. Daisy and her father, and Willard, hardly a grown-up young man. He had taken possession of her and Shirley, two of the young men of the party shared the other girls, Mr. Morse having his sister and Miss Craven.

The river banks were at their loveliest. The boat was laden with passengers on the same



errand as themselves. Shirley was exuberant in her delight, yet her refined grace was quite enchanting. She was never pronounced, with all her eagerness.

"I hope I shall go to Annapolis when brother graduates, but he has been away so much at school, and all, that we never seem intimates. And then we live so retired. This seems an enchanting fairyland to me. You are all so kind and delightful."

Willard smiled down into the pretty face. Helen half suspected what the ending would be, yet there was a curious feeling at her heart. It was not any pang that Shirley could heal the wound she had felt really grieved to give, perhaps a little surprise that it had gone no deeper when Willard had seemed in such earnest. And yet she could not consider him fickle. Was it not more manly to understand that her regard was pure friendship and could not ripen into love?

The throng wended its way from the landing to the beautiful grounds, laughing and chatting, some of them met by military associates. Mr. Dawson and a friend had come to



welcome his sister's party and a general introduction ensued.

"You are just in time to see the cadets march in to dinner," explained Lieutenant Wayne. "It's nothing to the parade, but it may interest you. Some are quite raw still, but it is astonishing what we do with the raw material. Burnet, did you say?" turning to Mr. Morse. "Archie?"

Mr. Morse replied in the affirmative.

"Oh, he has passed one of the high-up examinations, and his class is jubilant. I'll see if we may be allowed to offer incense at his shrine to-day," and he despatched an adjutant on the errand.

There was a sudden explosion of the drum corps, shrill and loud. The girls looked startled. Shirley grasped Willard's arm. The lieutenant laughed.

"It is not war's dread alarm, but a peaceful attack on the bastions of physical sustenance. Why, it is like providing for an army."

The companies seemed to rise from everywhere. The crowd made way for them. There



were nods and smiles as the cadet captains marched them along. Some of the young faces had a tired look, but they stood erect and kept step finely.

"It is a hard week for the poor fellows," said Fred Dawson. "They can't have a home vacation until next year. Now comes a crowd worth looking at."

You could see the difference. Second and third class men in dazzling whiteness, glittering belts and buttons, subalterns with chevrons and stripes, different ranks with their insignias, officers with gold lace and swords, stepping with the precision of a machine. Helen fairly held her breath at the sight.

"And to think they may all go to be shot at," exclaimed Leslie, regretfully; "the end of all this splendid training."

"Oh, no! A good number find fine positions in civilian life and the different government posts. But the training does give them a certain *esprit* that shows in after life. I'm quite a believer in military training. You learn one excellent lesson, and that is obedience."

"Theirs not to reason why," exclaimed



Helen. "But can they never use their own judgment?"

"The judgment is used beforehand and higher up. And the men come to rely upon their superiors."

Now the excursionists made up the ranks and began to move around. Elegant dowagers, stylish young girls under the waving canopy of dainty summer parasols, in white frocks and picture hats, grave-looking mothers who seemed searching for a familiar face.

"What would your party like most to see?" asked the lieutenant. "How many of you have been here before?"

"Only one lady, Miss Grant. You'd like to take it all in, Miss Brooks, and you'll want to see it, Shirley? We can do a little and then we must have some luncheon——"

"And wouldn't the ladies like to go to a cadet tea? It's quite fun if you don't mind the jam."

"Why, that would be splendid," declared Lorraine. "We have class teas at college. And what do the cadets do—pour tea and pass it around?"



"Well, they pass it around and the sweets and, I think, salted almonds and crisp biscuits. Is that what you do? How many of you are college girls?"

"Miss Grant and Miss Brooks are graduates. Both were honor girls. I lost a year on account of illness. And the fair girl with golden locks will begin her third year. We might have been seven if we had brought down others, nay, fourteen or perhaps fifty."

"I have no sisters. We are five boys. And we haven't any churchyard cottage, either. One of us is at Annapolis. We may do a great honor to our country," and a humorous smile crossed his face.

"Miss Chardavoyne's brother is there. They are Virginians."

"Why, I must hunt up that bit of relationship. But I am interested in a girls' college. Is it at all like a convent? Do they shut you up within high walls and place sentinels at the gates? Are you watched closely lest you should indulge in midnight orgies?"

She knew that was chaffing, but she tried to look serious and resentful.



"We are on our honor. Midnight orgies are hardly respectable. And they cost too much the next morning."

"You really *do* study?" in a tone of assured surprise, drawing his brows a little, while a smile lurked about his mouth.

"If we didn't there would be a dearth of teachers and story writers and—oh, I can't enumerate half the things women are doing."

"Are they like Tennyson's Princess? Do you taboo men?"

"It doesn't look quite like it. Statistics prove that college girls marry about in the average. And we do have splendid times. There are concerts and lectures and plays and dances and teas and athletics and games. Oh, I assure you we are quite like ordinary people, a little better, I think."

They both laughed then.

"And that pretty girl is the young man's sweetheart, isn't she?"

"Which one?" rather indifferently.

"Why, the fair-haired one, the Virginian, didn't you call her?"

"Do you think so?"



"Don't you like her?"

"Yes, I do. She is sweet, charming. She writes lovely little poems quite in the old English style, and has had a dainty song or two set to music. But the other is my dear friend."

"She is fine and noble looking, with a good deal of character. And the young man looks good and trusty. But he will take the other. Now we might make a wager——"

"No, I shall not. And we must not discuss the subject," she replied, with dignity.

"Oh, we are fond of settling the matter of sweethearts. Our training is so prosaic and practical, and as we have no time to write stories we indulge in the summer romances of other people."

Lorraine was annoyed at the summary manner in which he settled the matter. They had crossed over to the other side, and now a throng of visitors came between. They made several ineffectual attempts to follow, and when they succeeded the others were not in sight.

"Oh, what shall we do?" exclaimed Lorraine.



"Loiter around. No one is really lost, you know. They may be missed for a few days, but the guards find them and restore them to their friends. We will go to the library; Mr. Morse wanted to inspect that."

There was a village of white tents, the encampment of the young cadets, the chapel, the barracks with their rounded battlements, the great hills and bluffs, the magnificent old trees, the rows of younger ones straight and slim, the river winding in and out fretting the shore in little eddies, studded with crafts of various kinds. What a picture it made!

"I shouldn't think you would ever be lonely," Lorraine said, glancing at the crowds.

"Oh, this is our holiday appearance. They are summer friends and fall off at the first cool wind of autumn. Then we are left mostly to ourselves and the long and dreary winter."

"I doubt if it is very dreary," rather archly.

"What do you do winter evenings?"

"Study if you have to. There is a delightful library where girls and teachers congregate, there are clubs and societies and impromptu



dances and readings, and bits out of plays, and oh, a hundred things."

"But you have a lot of girls. Now if there were girls here,—but you can't have a co-education in military matters," with comical gravity.

"I'm glad to be a girl. I wouldn't be a soldier, nor a sailor, nor a business man, nor a politician."

"I'm afraid you are not a suffragist."

"Our English relatives call it suffragette. No, I am content with the present state of things. But then I'm only a girl."

"This turn to the library. Oh, here is one of the officers of the day, a warm friend of mine, Captain Prescott, and a fine fellow. Allow me to present him to you."

Lorraine bowed gracefully.

"I've been hunting up a young fellow for a clergyman, and you never saw a happier chap. I think he hasn't many friends to visit him. And the first year is tough. There was quite a party."

"A Mr. Morse?"

"Yes. Know him?"





"That is our party. We are on the right tack. That's rather nautical," and Wayne laughed.

They passed on and soon reached the building. Miss Morse and Miss Craven were standing in the doorway.

"We thought we would have to send out a scouting party," she said. "It was too bad to get separated in a crowd like this. We are all here and have two invitations to tea. Why, one can't do half the things one would like. And they say we must see the parade. We have succumbed to an attack of military ardor."

"Thank you," and the lieutenant touched his cap. "I have been trying to convince Miss Denman that soldiering is one of the grand professions. But she doesn't convert easily. You will have to come up about once a week through the summer, I think, if I succeed."

"And next summer as well," said Lorraine, gayly.

The others had quite a bevy of acquaintances about them. Helen was escorted by the fine-looking Captain Franklin, who insisted on



their attending a tea given by his company, as it was one of the rather grand events.

"Oh, where did you stray off to?" asked Leslie. "We have been meeting so many nice men. Why, I am quite fascinated with brave men in their martial array. We ought to have a room at the hotel and come every day. You will only have time for a mere glimpse. We were just thinking of sending out a scout. Are you tired to death? Have you had a nice time?"

"Rather," with a queer little smile.

"If you are ready," announced Captain Franklin, placing himself and Helen at the head of the van, and insisting on her taking his arm lest they should get separated in the crowd.

There was a big booth ornamented with flags. In the centre was the large tea table with dainty tempting refreshments of the lightest kind; a great tea urn and a pyramid of lump sugar, another of sliced lemon. It was evident they had been waiting for the captain, for his appearance was hailed with a cheer. A band at one entrance was discoursing music in



a rather low key, white-legged cadets were hurrying to and fro, as the tea-pouring began. Girls in the airiest of summer whiteness, laces and ribbons and most bewitching hats, chatted, laughed, and chaffed and cast languishing looks and bewildering smiles on the young men.

"Would you rather sit down? There must be some stools about and I suppose you are hardly used to standing around," began the captain, solicitously.

"Oh, no, indeed!" returned Helen. "It is such a pretty scene, and new to me. I do not want to miss one glimpse of it."

She glanced over at Shirley, who evidently was an attraction to the younger cadets. She seemed really unconscious of the showers of attention and Willard was proud of it. Yes, she was very pretty with her soft appealing eyes, her face full of smiles and dimples and the light of happy youth. It was not coquetry but a kind of innocent infectious enjoyment. Other girls were airing dainty little arts or claiming attention as their due, or looking at the young girl with half-envy that the cavaliers should





GIRLS IN THE AIRIEST OF SUMMER WHITENESS. — *Page 102.*







drift so readily to her, when she seemed so careless of their admiration.

Captain Franklin was much interested in his companion as well, although he had in some measure to be master of ceremonies, but in the between moments he resumed the talk, thinking what a bright, intelligent girl she was, and more seriously interested in college girls than Lieutenant Wayne.

"I wish your party were going to stay longer," he said, with a touch of regret that was very sincere. "That is the worst of summer acquaintances. It's just a bit of talk and then you are whirled off to some one else. Did you ever pause to consider how many nice people there are in the world and how you would like to go on with them? But it seems to be 'Hail and farewell.'"

"I have met many of the nice people, I am glad to say, and fortune has been very kind to me in that I have kept the most of them. But it must be different with men who are in the world so much."

"Our summers, you see, are crowded full. There are all the examinations and promotions



and disappointments that you cannot help sympathizing with the mothers and sisters, yes and not infrequently the fathers as well, who have something to ask or suggest, not thinking our rules have to be somewhat on the order of the Medes and Persians. And the constant throng of visitors, some really very charming. Perhaps it is well for the young fellows that it doesn't last any longer," and he laughed.

Helen glanced up with a quaint smile. "Did you go through all the experiences?" she asked.

"Oh, yes." Then came an interruption. Helen kept glancing round very much entertained until he was at her elbow. "Did you go to college because you sighed to traverse the halls of learning?"

"You put it romantically. I must confess I did," with a quick, uplifting expression.

"Well, I came rather against my will. It was this or college, soldiering or law. I'd like to have been a traveler, an explorer. I'd have joined for a hunt to the north pole if any one would have taken me. So my first year was a sort of protest, though I would have been



ashamed to fall behind. And the summer was so full of zest and life and pretty girls and fun and sentiment, and I fell in love with the major's daughter. I was half-past nineteen. I knew she was a thorough-paced coquette. We exchanged a few letters, when it was found out and sternly forbidden."

"I hope it didn't break your heart?" and Helen's lips quivered with half-suppressed amusement.

"I had a spell of being heroic and cynical and indulged in the luxury of hidden woe. But after all I was a healthy young fellow not likely to go into consumption, and my studies and the hard reading did interest me. The second summer I had a vacation. You wouldn't suppose I would have been glad to get back here, but I was, truly, and it has been a delight ever since. I think I am a soldier from conversion. Am I boring you?"

"Oh, no, no!" eagerly, her eyes sparkling.

"So I have a soft spot somewhere in my body for these young fellows who do not have much fun and have a good deal of hard work. They get a little demoralized by the bewilder-



ing smiles of the girls, but there is plenty of time to get over it."

"I'd like to hear about the major's daughter," glancing up archly.

"Well, the major's daughter married before the next summer, and three years later obtained a divorce and married a millionaire nearly as old as her father. She is a grand lady now, going abroad every year for a London season. And I am a captain on a not very munificent pay, with a little patrimony beside. Do you see how wise the stern parent was? I could never have gratified her ambitions. But I fancy the matter would have ended by mutual weariness, as so many young affairs do. Still, they are useful for an experience. I dare say there will be fifty engagements before the summer is over, and only one or two of them will stand the test of time."

"Then you do not believe in early loves?"

"Oh, Miss Grant, they are not really loves, or very seldom. The fancies of inexperience would be a truer name. Don't you suppose a girl's mind changes as well? There ought to be a rule that no one should really settle to a



choice before the age of twenty-five. Well, the woman might be a few years younger. There, your friends are coming for you and I think the tea is about gone. I must apologize. I've kept you here listening to my wisdom when I should have been introducing you to some fascinating lieutenants."

"I have enjoyed it all and am inclined to be glad there were no lieutenants."

"There are some fine evolutions going on now," began Mr. Morse. "Do you not want to see them?"

"Why, of course," the captain answered for her. "I can be spared from my arduous employment, and if I shall not bore you too much may I ask the pleasure of being your escort? Or shall I find a gay young lieutenant?"

"I prefer the captain, as he is of higher rank," with a gleam of mischief in her eyes.

He gave some orders to the subaltern. The crowd was thinning out, seeking new pleasures. They gathered the party—Lorraine having picked up a new admirer and divided him with Leslie.



"I want you to see these two friends of mine," Helen said. "Our friendship has lasted three years without a break."

"I imagine one would hate to break with you," in a low tone.

"I am only an ordinary girl. And there are some splendid ones."

"I like the ordinary kind," he returned, laughingly.

The plaza was a fascinating sight. Several companies were going through splendid evolutions. Helen did not wonder that men themselves were fascinated with the wonderful order and precision, the figures were so far beyond anything she had ever seen. And the speckless military attire, the trappings of the officers made a glitter that sent a shimmer through the atmosphere.

"The next best thing will be to get seats for the grand parade, the last show of the day. You haven't seen a tithe of West Point and you surely must come again. I'll see what I can do and then I will have to leave you. 'Duty calls, we must obey.' Did you ever write that in a copy book?"



"When I was a little girl living in the country."

"It is too bad I cannot hear about that after all the confidence I have bestowed upon you."

The captain was off in a flash, but they lost sight of him in the crowd. He returned with the welcome news that he had found an excellent place and pre-empted it.

"So many of the excursionists went with the boat that you will have a better chance. Keep close and follow me."

The cadets who had been keeping the seats rose and touched their caps as they disappeared. Then the several soldier escorts had to rush back to duty with regretful farewells.

"I do hope you will come again," Captain Franklin exclaimed earnestly. "Here is my card, and I shall be only too happy to convoy you about—there is so much you have not seen. I wish to-day had been twice as long," with a gallant gesture of the hand.

"Your captain was very attractive," Leslie began, laughingly. "Was the tea most delightful?"

"The talk was," answered Helen, brightly.



The parade was well worth seeing, though some of the young faces showed signs of fatigue that could not be tolerated in the step. The music was inspiring. Hands and handkerchiefs were waved, and more than one good-bye sent to some one in the ranks.

"I wouldn't have missed the day for anything," Willard said. "I hope you all enjoyed it as much as I. What a pity Danforth couldn't have stayed!"

"It was indeed worth seeing," Mr. Morse admitted. "And now we must make our way to the train, though the sail down would have been delightful."

Willard took Helen's arm. She glanced at the glowing face and expressive eyes that smiled over to her as Shirley said to him:

"You might let me walk the other side of Helen. I've hardly seen her all day."

"That would be a mannerly sort of escort, I must say," in a half derisive and wholly amused tone. "You shall sit together in the train."

"Wasn't it all splendid?" and Shirley drew a long breath. "I couldn't help but think of the



old Greeks and Persians and Franks, with Charlemagne and other old generals at their head. And you didn't have any fear, for they were not going out to fight. And the music was superb! The cadets must have a good time. And they were so amusing with their chaff and nonsense, but they do compliment one so. I never saw such a lot of men together before. And wouldn't it be just grand to go to the graduation ball! They have one every year. Do you suppose it is as gay at Annapolis?"

"We must go and hunt up your brother sometime," Willard made answer, pressing the arm he held. Then suddenly remembering, he exclaimed: "Did you enjoy it, Helen?"

"Oh, very much. It will take me some time to think it all over; at present it swims before my eyes."

"And that captain—he seems such a nice honorable sort of fellow. He looked as if he was making himself very interesting."

"Yes, he was. There was so much to talk about."

Helen noted that there was no jealousy in his



tone. And yet he had once been ungracious about Mr. Morse.

"It quite stirs one's patriotic blood. Oh, Helen, do you remember when we came up here with father and——"

"And dear Daisy. I thought of it more than once," in a softened tone.

"And was that the first time you were up here?" inquired Shirley.

"Yes. I had never been about much—for pleasure."

"And isn't it odd—this is the first time I have been to any such place, and we both came with you." Then the pressure on the arm was hers. "I went to New York the first winter I was at college and had a splendid time at the theater and opera. I do so love music, even the band," enthusiastically.

"And it is funny, but my first visit of any note was at New York, also. But I didn't attend the opera. It was for shopping to get ready for school," and amused lines crossed Helen's face at the remembrance. She could see the little girl again with her patroness, Mrs. Van Dorn.



The coach was not crowded and the party found seats together. Leslie and Lorraine sat right behind Helen and Shirley. The latter was talking in a most animated fashion.

"I never quite decided whether she was truly pretty until this afternoon," Leslie began in a low tone just for Lorraine's ear. "She suggested a lovely rose just coming into bloom."

"And how furiously she flirted!" rather indignantly.

"No—she really didn't do anything to attract attention. The cadets hovered about her, she couldn't drive them away—you can't imagine her being rude. And Mr. Bell looked proud and satisfied to have the loveliest girl in the circle."

"I did like her. She's curiously fascinating in some ways. But she's taken that young fellow away from H—and I feel almost as if I hate her."

Leslie studied the face so full of annoyance.

"I fancy she gave him up. Perhaps they were only dear friends. You know it seemed at first as if he was Miss Craven's admirer. Mrs. Bell loves her dearly, but she doesn't



suggest any nearer tie. I do not think he is grand enough for her."

Lorraine looked surprised. "He is doing finely, I believe; graduated from Columbia and the law school, and has a most excellent situation. And his brothers-in-law are men of position; one is a clergyman."

"He is a nice, manly fellow, so tender to his mother that it fairly touches one. And I can't bear to think of his being thrown away on *her*," with an indignant nod.

"You don't do her justice, Lorraine. She has a very sweet nature and some capabilities that may blossom out into absolute virtues. We are not all alike. And some girls are slow in developing. Lorraine, didn't you have a good time? I thought you were enjoying everything. And we are not in a hurry to marry off our dear girl."

"Oh, just let me have a good time being disappointed," Lorraine said, rather shortly.

"I should much sooner choose Mr. Morse," Leslie said, in a very low tone.

"Why, I never thought of Mr. Morse looking at one of us even. He seems so much older,



but he was charming at Christmas, only by and by he and his sister are going to keep house together and it would be a pity to spoil that. Hasn't Shirley talked a steady stream since we entered the car! All about her conquests, I dare say."

The soft voice had wandered on through joyous inflections, with now and then a reply from Helen in pleasant tones that seemed an approval.

Leslie took Lorraine's hand in hers. "You are all tired out," she said, with warm, tender sympathy.



## CHAPTER VI

### FOOD FOR CONSIDERATION

THEY were all tired out with their day's excursion, but the dainty supper and a rest on the porch in the delightful evening air were tranquilizing before they went to bed. Willard and Shirley sat in one hammock swinging slowly, Helen sought out Leslie, and Lorraine went over to Mrs. Bell, whom she had come to admire very much. In a certain way she did feel vexed, yet she had a misgiving that she was not altogether in the right. If she had liked Willard Bell less she would not have cared. He was a very young girl's ideal, and youth does not count by years any more than age. He had so many pleasing ways that she really wished for her brother the pretty deference to his mother, to women in general. Her brother would have been inclined to call Miss Morse and Miss Craven "old maids." Willard did not put any difference of age between them.



Shirley was radiant the next morning and brimming over with her day's pleasure. Lorraine was rather languid, she was hardly rested over the last weeks of college examinations and the gayeties crowded in everywhere. Not for worlds would she have failed in entering the seniors, and although she had made little reference to it, she dreaded the thought of parting with Helen, whose decision for the postgraduate year had rejoiced her heart.

This morning there was a drive over to the river to a beautiful point and from thence to Irvington, to visit all the Irving haunts and remembrances. The family carriage would hold six, then there was the phaeton and the runabout. Mrs. Bell preferred staying at home with Mrs. Howard.

"You don't know how comforting it is to meet some one of your own age who has lived through sorrows and come to the serenity of acceptance. With youth it is always a striving for hope, an admixture of the future, but when you have reached the summit and see the gentle decline the beautiful outlook is toward the sunset and the hills of God. We are both going



the same way and we enjoy our pilgrimage. And it is the time of life for young people to be storing up joys and delights that will make sunshine in the after days."

"There will be six of you in the carriage," said Willard. "Let me take the surrey and the children and one girl to keep them in order——"

"Miss Shirley!" cried Elma. "She makes up such pretty stories about birds and squirrels and everything."

Wilma went round and clasped her hand. She was a little girl with them. It was a kind of childhood she had missed and was not too old to enjoy, but she raised her eyes pleadingly to Willard. Was she crowding Helen out of anything?

"You girls will enjoy being together, oh, learned young women," waving his hand to the three. "And I know you will trust me with your treasures, Miss Craven. I'll promise to keep them in good order and safety. We'll follow close behind as befits our youth."

"That's for Shirley," thought Lorraine. "Still I'd rather have Helen, only—well, there



really was no choice for us," settling her sweet lips severely.

"We will take some luncheon, a basket in each vehicle, though we shall find at least two nice hotels. But this will make it more of a picnic."

"You know just the right thing to do," and Willard bowed courteously.

"I want to sit by Shirley," declared Elma, and she caught the girl's hand, kissing it rapturously.

"All the time? That wouldn't be fair," protested Wilma, with a disconsolate curve of the lip. Shirley looked up eagerly as if begging Willard to settle it.

"I tell you how we will manage it. We'll be gone nearly all day. First, one girl shall sit by me—and really I thought you liked me ever so much! I know lots of nice stories, too. That will be half an hour, say, then she may change with the other one. And then I must have Shirley for an hour to even up your two half-hours, don't you see?"

They did not understand the casuistry, but it looked fair and they agreed. So he helped in



Elma and Shirley, and took Wilma beside him.

"I drive a little sometimes," the child exclaimed, wistfully. "And I'm learning to ride. Betty is so gentle."

Betty and Nan were both saddle horses and a comfortable team together. The other two were more spirited.

Helen sat on the middle seat with Miss Morse. She wanted to talk of the best studies for her coming year's course, and if she would not find time to tutor a little.

"You are fine in Latin and Greek; the only drawback in that line is that you are so young. I do believe college life keeps a girl younger. I've been watching these few years back. They are as young now at twenty as they were a dozen years ago at sixteen. Then the girl began to think of a husband, as marriage seemed the only satisfactory destiny. Now they develop more symmetrically, they consider their health. We shall not see so many broken-down women at forty. And the physical training ought to enable them to do a little housework if occasion required. So they will make



better wives. We hear about girls who do not know how to cook a potato or broil a steak with all their learning, yet a few years ago I was out camping with a party of girls who exhibited a good deal of ingenuity, I thought. They built a shed and stretched some enameled cloth over it to keep the rain off of an old cook stove a neighboring woman lent them. We burned wood, of course. We cooked and baked, we had a fine bed of coals to broil on, and no awful blunders were made such as we sometimes read of in a story. What is all your chemistry and some of the household branches good for if you can't put them into practice?"

"That must have been great fun," returned Helen, her eyes alight with amusement. "I'd like to try it. Come to think, it is the difference in the girls, isn't it? I have two cousins in the family of the aunt I lived with in childhood. Jenny went to work in a shop when she was quite young, but she makes an excellent, thrifty housekeeper. Aurelia hated every kind of work and read the trashiest sort of novels and planned the most romantic future. She ran away and married a poor man who isn't



very smart, as Hope people say. She has had to come home to live. She hated to study. I doubt if school or college would have done anything for her."

"Perhaps not. Yet I have seen some quite unpromising girls develop slowly into very fair women. You do find the bent of a girl's mind. And, I believe, I could count up half a dozen women who when they had passed forty took to writing, when no one had ever suspected them of possessing a genius. I have a friend who brought up a family of children, and one daughter was an artist. One day, and she was past fifty then, it came to her like a revelation that she could learn to paint small articles, flowers, and bits of scenery. Her daughter thought it quite impossible. So she took lessons of a stranger and was much encouraged. Her husband died suddenly and his affairs were greatly involved. Her artist daughter was abroad at this time. The furniture was sold, the large home was no longer needed. She put three of her own paintings among the pictures, a few of which were by well-known artists. One of hers, a really lovely scene, was run up to a



hundred dollars. She went to the person who bought it and explained, but instead of making it less valuable to him he ordered two others. She is nearly seventy now and has earned considerable money, is a member of an artists' club, and her children are very proud of her. We shall never know how many mute, inglorious Miltons there are. And look at the women left widows, who care for and educate a family."

"Why, that is quite a romance," declared Helen, "worth living to be fifty, or even seventy."

"We are trying now to develop and aid the powers a girl possesses. We want to give them a fair chance. And I think they are coming to understand that and are anxious to accept it. We can't make them all geniuses, and yet I think a good home maker is in one way a genius and worthy of all praise. It takes some wisdom and understanding of values to keep a house on limited means. And I believe girls will look more seriously at marriage in the future, since single women are coming to fill so many fine positions."



Lorraine had been listening. Now she leaned over, just touching Miss Morse's shoulder.

"Dear Miss Morse, will you tell me what I can be best fitted for? I can do several pretty things; I am a tolerable scholar; I want to graduate, for father would feel so awfully disappointed if I did not. He considers education a sort of evolution and believes in the end it is going to raise the standard of the whole country. But I really haven't any aptitude for teaching; I should be afraid of the girls and, oh, I should be a wretched disciplinarian. I think I could make and trim a bonnet and plan a gown—I have lovely ideas there. Of course, there is no need of my doing anything—but, if there should be reverses! Oh, how do girls live when their fathers die!" she cried, passionately, her eyes humid with tears.

"My dear," in her rich soft voice that she had not allowed to become strident, "it may be that your chief duty is to glorify daughterhood. And this is why we are seeking to develop the higher moral qualities as well, and not have the outside exterior polished with the gloss of charming manners, and the interior a neglected



field of weeds. The fine ideals based on truth will be the true value of life in that state to which we are called. All these duties and relations find their own place and work if we seek earnestly."

"The world is full of work," commented Leslie. "And the education ought to carry with it a force sufficient to direct life in the right channel. Mere pleasure and amusement pall at length, as we see the ridiculous things society people invent to keep up some sort of excitement as they come to the dregs. It does seem a pity when the harvest is crying out for laborers."

"Then you think I ought to be content?" Lorraine said, with a glint of humor in her eyes. "And just drift along while these two girls will be tugging at the wheel of the world's advancement?"

"No, you are not to drift. You are only a girl now and your duty is to evolve the true woman. I shall keep watch of my best girls in the hope that my labors will be rewarded."

"Are you too scholastic to enjoy this lovely scenery?" asked Mr. Morse. "If the world is



full of work it is also full of beauty in the places where God's hand has not been desecrated. I am truly glad that some of the wealth of the world is used in beautifying homes and that people really live in them, at least in the summer. Look at this magnificent garden."

The house stood back on a slight elevation, and was in itself a model of beauty and comfort. Children were playing about the wide porch where only the columns were draped with vines, leaving the outlook of wide spaces. Then there were beds of magnificent bloom, great masses of one kind and color, another bed different, but all harmonious.

"It is perfection!" exclaimed Juliet. "And that is the highest praise one can bestow. But—such homes are the luxury of life. If I were ever so rich I shouldn't spend my money that way, for I have seen so much of the sore needs of humanity. But I am glad there are people who can, so long as they do not build a high wall and shut out their less fortunate neighbors. I think of Elim with its wells of water and the seventy trees of palm. How glad the



pilgrims must have been on their weary journey. And it is our duty to train the poor and ignorant to respect their neighbor's belongings, as a matter of honesty. To come and despoil them is as much a sin as any other thievery. It is taking or destroying what they cannot restore, the fruit of envy and malice."

For half a mile or more they passed these beautiful estates; then there were wooded ranges, hills, depressions through which they could discern the shining river. They recalled bits of poems and romances, historic legends, and not a few of Irving's fanciful stories "that ought to have happened if they never did," Helen declared. Leslie was charmed beyond measure.

A little stream winding its way mostly through shady places attracted them, and Helen's quick sight discovered watercress.

"A never-failing spring there," said Mr. Morse. "We ought to stop and give the horses a rest, and I think some luncheon will not come amiss. Where are the others loitering?"

They drank of the sparkling spring that



some one had stoned around and made a veritable well. Helen gathered handfuls of cress to spice their meal. Willard turned round the bend of the road with his precious freight. The children were exuberant in their joy. Willard was in a charming mood, but Shirley had a pretty shyness that kept the color wandering over her face, and her eyes downcast as if there was a secret in them.

It was a merry luncheon, and they left some crumbs for the birds that had played orchestra as if they were trying to outdo each other. They had not forgotten the horses, either, and after a little rest they wended their way down to Sleepy Hollow and the ground made so romantic by the witchery of Washington Irving's pen. Here was the quiet graveyard with its plain slab, here was the old house much remodeled and renewed since he had passed out of it, but here were the old drawings from "Rip Van Winkle," and "Ichabod Crane" and "Katrina." How strangely beautiful it seemed this summer afternoon with the wind making tender melodies in the trees.

"What I like is that queer history of New



York and all the Dutch people and the gardens and what they did and said, and the old Governor, who used to fly in such passions," said Elma. "Mrs. Aldred said it was only a fanciful story, though the Dutch people did live there first. We talk it over and make it true, because we like the queerness of it."

"Why, I've never read it," declared Leslie. "And that's funny, too, when we have learned Irving almost by heart."

"Oh, then you must when we go home. We have it in our library upstairs. Oh, I do like it so! And the queer Dutch pictures!"

They could have lingered all the afternoon and found points of interest, but the ride home was quite long, though they were going a shorter and less beautiful way. They paused at the hotel, where they had a cup of tea and milk for those who desired it.

No one proposed a change, so they drove on in the same order, but Wilma fell fast asleep on Shirley's shoulder with her protecting arm about her. From time to time Willard inquired if she was at all comfortable, and she said "yes" in her soft, cheerful tone. Wilma



did not wake until Willard lifted her out of the carriage.

"It's been a heavenly day," Shirley breathed, with a contented sigh.

They did not talk much, only to make some plans for the morrow. Mr. Morse felt that he and his sister must go. There were so many things to crowd into his brief vacation.

"I think Margaret and I have had one of the best times of our lives," he said to Miss Craven. "I believe you have found the true secret of using this world's goods and extracting the honey that nourishes those you come in contact with. Accept my very warmest appreciation of these delightful days that I shall never forget. My home is so different, not merely the rooms in which I bestow my worldly goods, but the surroundings and the people. Yet we are to do our duty where God seems to give us our work. You are doing it with a large-hearted disinterestedness, and I wish you many happy years in it."

"I certainly do find happiness in it. Sometimes I think there is too much pleasure——"

"No, don't think that. If it were solely for



yourself it would be different. We must make the world happier as well as better."

"I could not live just for myself," she said, simply. "Some day I must give an account of my stewardship."

"That is the way to look at it," he rejoined.

They were full of regrets at the breaking up of the party, for Lorraine had been summoned home as well. Miss Craven had insisted that Leslie should stay with Helen, as she had some further plans. Mrs. Bell was persuaded to remain until the first of the week, when Willard was due at the office.

Helen had a talk with Miss Morse that was really very sweet and encouraging.

"But you will find college is only the beginning, if you mean to teach. Indeed, is not our whole life a school, learning and unlearning, since many of the things of past years must be gone over and adapted to the new demand? But you cannot tell how glad I shall be to have you a while longer. And I am thankful you have given me such a charming friend as Miss Craven. I want to keep in touch with her."



"Oh, I am so glad!" Helen cried, joyfully.

She would not confess then that she knew of Helen's early endeavors, that had really been the moving influence of Miss Craven's life, the love that had inspired her individuality.

They were not less sorry to part from Lorraine. And though she still called Shirley an interloper, she began to understand that Helen was not at all in love with Willard, though she liked him very much.

"And it's not worth troubling our friendship," she said, decidedly. "I'm not a bit jealous of Leslie, but I do wish you were not so much taken with that silly little thing because she writes verses."

Helen laughed good-humoredly, and kissed her. It was the girl's tender regard for her that caused the pain.

Then Helen and Leslie amused themselves with the twins and the Knickerbocker history, beside the drives and walks and calls. Shirley was hovering about Mrs. Bell or with Willard. Then came some word from her father. A friend would be in New York the ensuing week, Tuesday. Would her hostess see that





Amy Brooks.

SHE FLUNG HERSELF ON THE GRASS, CLASPING HELEN'S KNEES.  
*Page 133.*







she was put in his care and accept his sincere gratitude for the attention to his daughter, who was most enthusiastic over the pleasures of her visit? And he begged she would accept a slight token of his regard that would be forwarded to her from the city.

The token was a splendid copy of Dante. Of course, there was nothing to do but accept it.

Helen was sitting alone on a rustic seat under the great elm, late in the afternoon, when the light, graceful figure almost flew over the grass, then stopped short with a flushing face and outstretched hands as if in entreaty.

"What is it, Shirley?" she asked, deliberately placing a sprig of honeysuckle in her book. The girl had been so innocently confidential until the last two days.

"Oh, I wonder if I can tell you? Yes, I must;" and she flung herself on the grass, clasping Helen's knees, and raised her eyes with a touch of arch, bewildering sweetness and deprecation withal. "Oh, I don't know what you will think! I wasn't dreaming of any such thing. I don't understand now, and I don't



see how any one—you are so splendid, Helen. And I have but just one gift, writing verses to the people I love. I shall never be a fine scholar. I suppose there are some things about me pretty to look at—oh, how can I tell you! Miss Denman said one day I was a flirt, trying to attract everybody, but I don't care for admiration except from just a few. I accepted it from some of the girls because I didn't want them to think me proud or holding myself high, as if I could do that," and she laughed with a little hysterical sound; then suddenly burying her face in Helen's lap, began to sob vehemently, her slight form shaken with emotion.

"Shirley dear——" trying to raise the golden head.

"Oh, I wonder if you will call me 'dear' when you know all? I did not mean to be deceitful nor—nor treacherous, but it looks so——"

"Shirley dear, don't cry in that heart-breaking fashion. I think I know what it all means, and it ought to be happiness, not sorrow. You and Willard love each other."

"Oh, did you guess? It is the sweetest, dearest thing in all the world, and yet I may



not have the right. If I haven't it would be dishonest, treacherous, as I said before. And you have been so good to me. I planned it out last night. I couldn't sleep. First I was wild with joy, then torn with sorrow and shame——”

“Do you suppose Willard would have spoken of love if there had been any other claim? I cannot think so meanly of him. He is honest and truthful. He may have made a mistake, young people do at times, but he would not be double-minded.”

“He loved you; he always will. You are so sweet and generous and noble. I don't see how any one can help it! And his father and mother loved you and the dear girl who died. And I think there isn't very much to me. I never shall be a fine scholar or a grand woman as you and Miss Craven will be. Don't I see it when I am compared with a great many girls? But I don't understand how you came to give him up, and if it was from your very heart. This is what I want to know. Did I put myself in his way? He was so sweet about that song last winter. And I told him I wrote



verses to you, because there was a sort of inspiration in you. And this other song. His friend said I had a musical soul. And he begged me to write a few verses just for him. They were not love verses, as I wrote to you. Maybe I oughtn't have done it. It is since I have been here."

What a simple child she was, one of the joyous creatures fitted for a life of serene happiness in giving and demanding little back, in adoring the one who chose her out of all other women.

"And you didn't quite believe him?"

"I don't understand it myself. He is strange and mysterious and I don't want to hurt you. I don't want you to think meanly of me. I'd rather go back home for good and give up the delightful life here, and just wonder about it in loneliness and saying over to myself:

'Then come what may,  
What matter if I go mad—  
I shall have had my day.'

"Oh, you foolish child! Listen. If I had loved Willard as a girl should love the man she



is to marry, do you suppose I should have said 'No' to him? Indeed, it would have been love for me. It was very honorable in him to tell you about it, but you will be loved ten times more because you love him. And I would like to be your friend, just the sister friend I have been to him. There is no reason why you should not love him and rejoice in it, unless your parents think you too young, or do not wish you to go so far away."

"Oh, my sister was engaged five years, and no one said anything against that. Of course they were young and had to wait. And I shouldn't mind waiting years. I'd like to come back to college and study real hard on the things I *could* learn. And perhaps some day I shall write real good verses that he will be proud of, little sweet, tender things. The old Latin poets did not disdain them. Oh, don't you know that Miss Brooks was afraid at first that I'd copied some old poem?"

She almost laughed then, though tears beaded her bronze lashes.

Helen kissed her tenderly. She had never known quite such a girl, and she was a curious



study. She had supposed this would be the conclusion.

"There, dear, don't give it another anxious thought. You were very sweet to confide in me, but there was nothing wrong, and I do think you can trust Willard to the uttermost."

"I've been so happy all summer, only when I was afraid of not passing. And you helped me so, inspired me with courage. Oh, I feel that I can never love you enough." Then she sprang up as they saw Willard coming. Helen thought her the picture of a Greek nymph.



## CHAPTER VII

### IN THE HEART OF THINGS

"I SHALL never feel grateful enough to you," Willard Bell said that evening, when he had drawn Helen down the path for a conference. Shirley was, as usual, with Mrs. Bell, and the twins were an admiring audience. Leslie and Juliet were in the fragrant corner of the porch discussing various matters. "You have taught me so many new things, when I used to think," laughing with a wholesome gayety, "that I was much wiser and knew a great deal more about the world than you. Business, perhaps, but women have a clearer insight into things, and into each other's feelings; ought I not to say hearts?"

"It is an axiom, I believe, that we are not all wise at twenty. It is a real joy to go on learning."

"And sometimes quite mortifying to be con-



vinced of your ignorance. But it doesn't seem as if you had made mistakes."

"Oh, yes; no end of them," and the mirthful sound in her voice was cheering.

"You have been so wise and so generous in this matter. Helen, there are girls, and nice, pleasant ones, too, who would have upbraided me severely for this change of mind. I still believe if you had loved me I should have tried to come up to your ideal, for I do admire your strength and that kind of hopefulness," but in the pause Helen thought it would have been moulding her to his ideal instead. "If anything, I have a higher regard for you to-day and not so high an opinion of myself. The atmosphere of the past week has been different, more uplifting, I might say truer to the finer needs of the inner life. And this love has given me a clearer insight, though a few people, like your friends, the Morses, clarify the mental atmosphere wonderfully. And Miss Craven is just fine."

"She is all that," the girl returned with earnestness.

"Of course Shirley told you. She was so



awfully conscientious, dear little angel, she wouldn't even make a promise until she learned for herself how it stood with you, although I told her emphatically you had never accepted me as a lover. And I know now that this is the satisfying love of my life. In some respects she is still a child, and she has been queerly brought up, rather she has come up like some lovely wood flower that knows nothing much of the outside world. It is such delicious innocence, yet there is so much refinement and reticence about her. She doesn't fling herself at you, but you have to go in search of her fascinating graces. I suppose a young fellow in love lives in a state of rhapsody——" and Helen was touched by the tender throb in his voice that made it tremulous.

"What are you going to do?" She made an effort to bring him back to the serious side of the case. "Is it to be an engagement?"

"Why, yes," in a tone of surprise. "She is coming back for the next year. Oh, Helen, will you not be the dear and constant and sympathetic friend to her that you were to Daisy, that you have been to all of us? She reveres



you so highly that she will listen to any course. And though she seems so sweet and yielding, she has a strong sense of what is right; she is very honest with herself."

"But the serious side of the engagement. You must inform her parents."

Willard was silent. He had considered nothing but having her back where he could see her occasionally, and having Helen for a sort of mentor.

"She is much younger than her years in some respects and may agree readily to whatever you propose. But I should want to begin this new life in an honorable fashion. And if there is any objection it had better be made known now."

"I don't see why there should be," rather resentfully. "My standing is good, as well as my family. I have a fine outlook for the future, for I mean to make myself so necessary to the firm that when there is an opportunity I shall be offered a partnership. I am almost eyes to Mr. Loring now. I do not pretend to be rich—if that would make a difference."

"They might not like to have her go so far



away from home. Some Southern families are clannish."

"Oh, Helen, there are numbers of young Southern girls in New York eager for situations. They do not seem to mind leaving home any more than Northern girls. They come up to colleges, and to hospitals. The Chardavoynes trust Shirley away almost ten months of the year."

"Then, what is your idea?"

"I haven't had any real plan. You see, there has hardly been time. I couldn't go to Virginia now, for I am needed in the office. It seems to me matters might remain this way for some time——"

"And not have a real engagement? You will both go on loving each other more fondly, and if a break did occur it would be all the harder for each."

"Well," he began, determinedly. "I think I would wait and wait and wear out any father's patience. If there was any real objection to me—why, Helen, if I chose I could make a very nice selection in the city and that isn't bragging, either. It might stand awhile—say



until Christmas. Meanwhile she may be able to determine the wisest course."

"Talk it over with her," Helen returned, decisively.

"But you will be our friend and stand by us whatever comes?" entreatingly.

"Whatever comes in the line of duty and truth," she returned, seriously, looking at him with calm, earnest eyes.

"I shall not ask any wrong endeavor from any friend," he declared, proudly.

"And I wish you all happiness from the depths of my soul. In many respects your choice is a wise one. She is tractable and sweet-tempered, rather yielding where she loves, and so you must not demand too much."

"Oh, you need not fear that I shall play tyrant," and he gave a rather forced little laugh. "I should love her too much. I should be continually studying her happiness."

"You had better talk the matter over with her at once. I will send her to you."

He caught Helen's hand and kissed it. She was in a curious tumult of emotion and half



protest, that she should in any respect be the arbiter of these lovers. She could not regret that he had transferred the more passionate part of his affection to another. She could see the points of attraction in Shirley that she would never have—oh, Helen, you had not reached the highest point of human love, indeed, had hardly applied it to yourself! This year was going to be a great deal to her, and she was not willing to take up others' burdens while they walked through flowery meads sipping sweetness.

Shirley was in no mind to look at the case in its gravest aspect.

"Why, they wouldn't care," she cried, insistently. "They made no objection to Eloise's lover, and he was quite poor, and they had to wait ever so long."

"We will not have to wait, my darling. A year from this time we can plan our marriage. But I want you to come back so I can see you occasionally."

"Yes. I shall surely do that. Oh, I couldn't stay away now," flushing and looking prettier with the beauty blossoming of youth and truth.



"And there is so much to learn. I am quite an ignoramus still. Miss Craven, you ought to take pity on me and show me how to make a lovely home. At the South there are such troops of servants ready to work a week for an old gown or some finery," and she laughed mellifluously.

Willard colored. Was she dreaming of a home like this? But she was so joyously glad of everything, and she would come to understand. There was his mother, who had taken her fondly to her heart.

There were sunshine and showers alternately for the next twenty-four hours, bursts of gladness when she could not be grateful and loving enough, and then tears at the thought of parting.

"To think I shall not see you for two whole months. If it was only where any of you could come, but you would not like it after all this luxury and—and beautiful neatness. I was shocked myself when I went home last summer. You see, mamma keeps her part pretty and nice, and now that Eloise is away the rest goes anyhow. And we are away off from anybody



worth while, with the great mountain range at the westward of us. I should never be happy there again," and her eyes overflowed with tears.

It was a sorrowful parting. Mrs. Bell and Willard were to take her to New York and give her in charge of her father's friend. There would be nothing said about an engagement until Christmas.

Mrs. Bell held Helen clasped to her heart for many moments.

"Nothing can change my regard for you," she asserted in the tenderest of tones. "I could wish it had been different, but I shall have two daughters instead of one. Shirley finds an entrance in your inmost soul and she gives the enthusiastic love that fills every pulse of Willard's being. I think they will be very happy, and she, poor child, needs some one to make life what it should be to her. I shall count on your visit to me, and I have had such a delightful time with all your friends. Why, Helen, I am half in love with college life and almost envy you young people the advantages of to-day, the golden promises that make the way bright for you.



Yet I had the sweetness of my youth and my time, Heaven bless you, child."

It was positively lonely when they had gone. Then after sunset a soft rain began with its silvery patter on the leaves. They all gathered in the pretty sitting-room, and Leslie went on with the redoubtable Wouter Van Twiller.

"Does the engagement satisfy you?" Leslie asked, when they were alone that night.

"Partly. After all I suppose if the love lasts all will go right. Shirley will make a sweet wife and a lovely mother. She will give her children what she has not had, a delightful childhood."

"She is an odd compound. I cannot imagine Mr. Bell choosing her from hosts of well-balanced, admirable girls."

Helen laughed. "'Love hath vagaries of its own,' to quote from some forgotten poet."

"I shall not agree to your wasting your precious time upon her next year."

"Why, I might make a real poet of her."

"Let love and her husband do that."

Had Helen cared? Leslie wondered. She did not see how any man could pass Helen without



making a desperate effort to win her. Shirley was not to be mentioned in the same week.

It rained the next morning. They counted up the many beautiful days they had had for their party. Then letters came. Helen seemed to be deluged with them.

There was one from Grace Trevor. After glancing it over, she said: "Let me read this to you, Leslie. Miss Trevor didn't seem so very promising, but she has acquitted herself nobly. And a happy marriage is the result."

It was a very joyous epistle. Grace had finished her two years teaching, and been very earnestly solicited to add another year. She had given such good satisfaction and teachers were not over-abundant at Westport. She had saved part of her salary and would get her trousseau ready through vacation. There was such a pretty, cozy house, newly built, for sale, the owner having to go out to Denver on some business, and would settle there. Bert had been saving up a little money, and his father had offered to lend him some, so they were to buy it and commence housekeeping. That would scant their furnishing, but they wouldn't mind;



they could do that by degrees, and the house was considered a great bargain. Chrissy had a nice lover, too, but they would not be married until spring, and papa would be quite proud of both sons-in-law, even if they were poor young men.

“Although I protested against college life, and must have bored you dreadfully, my dear Helen, I have been thankful many times for that year, but mostly for you. You can never realize what all your good work and encouragement did for me. I was asked if I would substitute if they were in trouble about teachers, and I have promised to. I shall be glad to go on earning a little money. I have been a real success. I may say it without undue vanity, and papa is very proud of it. Isn't some of it due to that same college training that I resented so? But I have the sweet and sacred love to fill my heart with joy and gladness. What are you going to do? I hope you will find a splendid lover! I don't want you to get set in your ways and think education is the all of life, like Aunt Marian, though at Easter she took a prize of five hundred dollars on some



of the big sociological questions, and there were several hundred competitors. That was fine!

"I hope some day you will visit me. You may be sure I am a happy girl and shall be a glad and happy wife, and some of it will be owing to you. With my warmest love."

"That is what I call a most excellent destiny," declared Leslie. "It gives me courage to go on with unpromising girls, and it is really complimentary to our college that a year of it even could produce good results. I have seen some of the letters that have been sent back to dear *alma mater* full of praise for the good acquired. One girl of Miss Van Meter's is in China, helping to establish a sort of high school to fit Chinese girls for teachers. There are some rewards, you see. They may come our way one day," with a smiling air of comradeship.

"Leslie, I hope you will marry. You could make a lovely home!" Helen exclaimed, earnestly.

"Same to yourself. I've never even had a lover. I'm sure you have."



That sent them both into a fit of merry laughter.

In the evening, when Mrs. Howard had gone upstairs with the children, who claimed this indulgence in vacation, the three girls were in the cozy downstairs sitting-room with a light from the hall and another from the handful of fire on the hearth, for the evening had set in cool. Miss Craven had been rocking slowly to and fro, and now she stopped.

"Girls," in a sweet, entreating tone, "I have a plan to lay before you, and I hope you will feel generous enough not to thwart me."

"Oh, Juliet! Why, you know I wouldn't after all this lovely time you have given us," and Helen was beside her with a swift motion, taking both hands. The firelight made her face rosy and the eager smile gave promise.

"And Leslie?"

"Oh, Leslie wouldn't dare go against my wishes, though I may have to yield to her when she is on the college staff next year."

"A little brief authority," subjoined Leslie, in a tone of merriment.

There was a silence with a touch of vague-



ness in it, as if something was about to happen.

"Well!" Helen raised herself a trifle and stole her arm about Juliet's neck.

"It is this. I want to take a little journey for my own pleasure largely. In such a case one chooses one's companions. I don't want the poor, weary mothers this time, nor the working girls, nor yet the slum children. I have been doing some duty by them, and, like the children, want my reward."

"Do not say it is Europe," and Helen's tone was deprecating.

"No, it is not that. I want you two girls to go to Niagara with me. Well, perhaps a little farther. I want some one who hasn't been anywhere or seen anything, who will be new and fresh and joyous."

"Juliet!" The tone was almost reproachful.

Miss Craven pressed the hand against her soft cheek, and with her arm still kept Helen in her kneeling posture.

"You have both been lovely and entertaining to the guests. We have been in a sort of whirl,



and now a little excursion by ourselves will be like the last strain of music when the band has finished some overture."

Helen was ashamed of her pride. Why should she hate to take favors from the dearest friend she had?

"Oh, you are doing this just for us," she began, in an unsteady voice.

"No, partly for myself. I've been twice. The first time I seemed desperately alone with a rather gay party, who bristled with exclamation points and wanted you to do the same. I can't always be so expressive when people expect me to. And the second time with only four people. One lady had so many headaches and ailments that one could hardly think her own thoughts, so frequent were the demands for sympathy. And you are both well and enjoy everything, so it is no wonder I would like to take it again with your freshness and zest."

"Miss Craven, I think it is a lovely invitation," Leslie said, in a sweet, grateful voice. "I've almost envied the girls who talk this over so carelessly, as if it were an everyday



occurrence, girls who have fathers and plenty of money to spend. I've always had to study economy. I thought in another year I might take some indulgences, and this visit has been a beautiful thing to me. But Niagara! I really can't take it all in as something offered to me, and I shall have to thank you all along the way."

Helen's conscience pricked her and the quick tears came to her eyes. It is what she should have said first. Suppose in that far back time Juliet had repelled her advances. Suppose she had declined Mrs. Wilmarth's lovely summer proffer. She reached up and kissed Juliet and was not ashamed of the tears.

"I don't know what to say, dear, for Leslie has said it all," and her voice had little breaks of emotion in it. "It is very generous——"

"That is what money is for, I think: giving pleasure to some who feel they cannot quite afford it for themselves. And I have so much that it is a real charity for some one I love to come in and share pleasures with me. You see, dear girls, all the charity is not merely feeding and clothing the poor and giving them a day's



rest now and then. There are happiness and delight as well in sharing with those you love."

Helen's heart was full. Hadn't she been sharp and over-proud sometimes because she felt she did not want to be an object of beneficence? And was it not love that made the world blossom like the rose? Love that offered the beneficence, love that accepted? They were dear friends, one was rich, the other poor, and was not this mean little pride a sin?

"You had done so much already," she murmured. "It was to please me you had all these people here——"

"To please myself, dear. And it has been a real delight. I am going down to Vernon Park to see Mrs. Bell at her daughter's. I shall visit the college to see Miss Morse and Shirley. And if the minister should invite us all to a house-party I should go. I am not so afraid of the world as in the days when you came to my rescue."

Juliet gave a soft little laugh, and Helen had to join.

They had been talking in an undertone, partly whispering. Now Juliet rose, and with



her arm around Helen took a few steps across the room.

"We are very bad-mannered," she said to Leslie, "but sometimes this girl is proud and self-willed. She is my dearest friend, too, but I think she is afraid of my money. It has such a big 'M' to it that sometimes it really scares her. I used to be afraid of it, too, but I've been learning how to use it. If banks and bonds and stocks should fail, I should be glad that I had done some good and made some people happy while I had it. Do you not wish to hear how I first came to love Helen?"

"Indeed I should. But I soon learned as well."

"You lay too much stress on that," declared Helen.

She sat down on the divan and drew Helen beside her, telling over the episode when she first entered school and the loneliness that had preceded it. Helen could not say she embellished, it was such an honest, straightforward story. And how near she had been to going to college when Mrs. Howard came into her life.



"Why, it is just like a romance!" declared Leslie. "But it seems to me life is full of romances, some sad and some very beautiful."

"And one of the best is friendship—it has so many sides, blossoms out so often from some tiny bud, and when it is grown nothing ought ever to break it. Oh, where did we begin? You will both go to Niagara to watch over me and see that nothing dreadful happens."

"We will go because it is splendid in you to ask us," returned Helen; with glowing cheeks and eyes alight with affection.

"Another year I may take the girls. I am afraid they will grow up too fast. I like them so much when they have intelligence and are not afraid to show tenderness. I'd like to keep them there years. But I mean they shall have some of the best of this beautiful world when they can appreciate it thoroughly."

And then they talked of the wonderful world, of their own country, of Europe with its treasures, of far India and Japan; and the fire died out, though the rain beat against some of the



windows and was like a sound of the sea through the trees.

Afterward they said a tender good-night.

"Helen Grant, you have some of the most splendid friends ever any girl had," Leslie declared with fervent emphasis.

Did not one owe a great debt to friendship, then? A strange new humility swept across Helen's soul.

They planned it the next day. Mrs. Howard would take the children down to New York and the Park for their excursion, and they kissed their dear Miss Juliet with deep emotion.

To new and youthful eyes, the marvel of grandeur in its various aspects was simply fascinating. They had described Niagara from books and pictures, but to watch it moving ceaselessly, to listen to the sound of a hundred organs, to see all the exquisite coloring in the spray and the rainbows, to have it terrible when they went out one day and were caught in a driving shower, to study sunrise and sunset from either side of the glowing miracle, glancing into each other's eyes with word-



less admiration, was a joy to remember always.

Then they must go over to Alexandria Bay and see the famous Thousand Isles. Helen felt as if she wanted to demur, but Leslie was taking it with such a sweet gracious acceptance, such a very thorough enjoyment, that she could not cavil.

"I did not expect for years to have any such pleasures set in my life," she said, with lustrous eyes and a voice tender with emotion. "I planned to earn and save, and perhaps find some other body as eager for the delight. Then, you know, we should economize. We would walk instead of taking a hack. We should weigh carefully which of two excursions we would choose and settle upon the less expensive. Of course we would try to have some fun out of it all," and she smiled up archly, her face radiant with a lovely light.

"Then we would come back to work and recall so many points and pleasures that had slipped out of our minds at the time."

"But it wouldn't be half as delightful to go alone," remarked Miss Craven.



"Oh, no. I am quite sure I would not like to be a solitary traveler. I should want some one to compare notes with. Some one says, 'A pleasure shared is a pleasure doubled.' "

"I am quite sure it is. So you can understand how I enjoy company and the comforting talks."

Then there was some wonderful scenery—Lake Champlain and the historic ground, the romantic chasm of the Au Sable, the tourists of every variety. They sailed and drove and rambled, took short journeys hither and thither, and then came down the Hudson. Leslie must go her way and she did it with such sweet gratitude that Helen was pricked to the heart anew.

Then they would go down in the boat. It was early moonlight again, and the two sat out on the deck in the tranquil night air. Helen had had many thoughts during this journey, and she found her point of view had not always been of the finest.

"I want to make a confession to you, Juliet," she began in a tone almost tremulous with emotion.

"You know I have always loved you—I



think it came first because I could help and solace you. Then I had a feeling that I was assisting in your advancement——”

“As you were, you dear girl. I owe so much to you and Mrs. Howard,” and there was an eager pressure of the hand she held.

“And somehow I had come to think I had done a great deal for myself. I was willing to work for a splendid education. But after all everybody has helped. There was Mrs. Van Dorn, Mrs. Layton, and Mrs. Wilmarth. I couldn’t return anything to my first benefactress, but I did to the others. And I did not realize at first how rich you were, but you always have been generous. I was proud. I couldn’t bring myself to accept very much that I couldn’t return, where I could not share expenses. There were needy people *you* could do for, and I ought to do mostly for myself, with my strength and ability. I’ve been ungenerous, ungracious sometimes, but you make one feel that money is not the mere setting, that there is an underlying grace——”

“My dear, isn’t true friendship one of the greatest of these? I want to say that I have



learned many lessons, sometimes from the very poor. God has vouchsafed me many blessings, much prosperity. Even now I am not spending all my income. If I were a gay society woman, ordering Worth gowns and having thousands of dollars worth of diamonds and rare laces, no one would cavil at it. It was what Mrs. Davis hoped I would do. She does it and is never satisfied. I think," with a touching humility in her tone, "that I have been learning the better way, not merely to delight the eyes of the gay world and have them think me an acquisition, but to go to the hearts of those who need comforting, putting some joy in their lives. Happiness is such a delightful thing, more than meat and drink at times. I love pretty things and rare pieces of art, exquisite editions of books, and get them. I really have no taste for asceticism, though a little of the old severity clung about me at first. I cannot tell you how I enjoy life, yes, and the fortune, and I shall indulge in some luxuries, as I can find people to come and share them with me. I shall go out to others whose lives are full of work and pinches, and manage not to drop down by



dint of many sacrifices. They are as worthy of help as the very poor. I should like to have you and Leslie—but you may do finer and better work following out your own plans and aims. You will not be jealous, Helen?”

“Oh, Juliet! Oh, no, no!”

“You will always be my dear sister. You have promised to come in any trouble and adversity. And you both will be welcome visitors. We shall never allow anything to come between. And if our feeling of benefits conferred comes to a little jar, we will adjust it by the Golden Rule read both ways—Whatever you would do for a friend be content to receive back in return.”

Helen kissed her friend fondly. She had gone beyond her, and now she was glad Juliet had reached that higher round. She must strive to attain to it.

In a plain little room Margaret Morse and her brother sat talking. She had been reading letters from the two girls, each one full of gratitude and delight.

“I wish there were more rich women like Miss Craven,” he said, and gave a soft little



sigh. "Such a one does more real good than the many discussions of clubs and charity circles. She makes the duty to one's neighbor attractive, and your neighbor is not simply the man who fell among thieves, as some think. We could often reach out our hand and clasp the other without asking idle questions. Sowing in God's watchful care, no good seed is ever lost. Every day since that visit I have thanked God that He gave the fortune, and the wisdom to use it."

"I wondered a little—oh, I did half hope—you seemed to understand each other so well."

Margaret paused and flushed and refrained from glancing up.

"That I would fall in love? She is worthy of the highest regard of the finest man. Shall I confess that I saw a vision? But it was not just the thing for my workaday life, and it would in some respects mar hers. She will keep it a lovely woman's life if she never marries and it will be full of the fruits of the spirit. I shall be interested in it. No own mother could be wiser or lovelier than she is to those two children, and she is so interested in girls'



lives. She understands from her own loveless girlhood how lonely they may be without actual poverty. She may find her hero some day."

Margaret glanced about the plain room, where the poor and the unlearned were made welcome and trained in the paths of useful citizenship. Just adjoining was a study more to his refined taste, where there were some choice books and a few pictures after his own heart. But here books were a little soiled, chairs bore the marks of hard usage, the table cover was blotted with the service of awkwardly handled pens. She knew he had set apart some years of his life to the service of his Maker without considering his own desires.



## CHAPTER VIII

### THE DELIGHT OF RETURNING

HELEN GRANT'S heart throbbed with a curious delight, standing there by the window, watching the long string of girls crowding up the walk, asking questions of each other or looking at their compeers with frightened eyes and vague expressions, some pausing suddenly as if half resolved to turn back. She thought of her first entrance—should she not go down and befriend these strangers, she who had been so kindly met and welcomed? One moment it seemed ages ago, then only yesterday.

She had reached her destination just about luncheon time and Leslie had met her. They would go to Mother Weeks' clean little restaurant, where the plain fare did not attract most girls until their allowance was nearly spent. It was very clean, with some vases of old-fashioned flowers set about. One pink pitcher was rich with deep velvety brown and yellow mari-



golds. On one table there was just a celery glass crowded full of sweet verbenas and sweet clover in bloom, with its white nodding stems.

"I came last evening and spent the night with Miss Morse. She was so glad of our letters. Oh, it seems good to get back! And the register of the seniors is not nearly full, so we can have the old room. It is such a pity they should drop out when they are so near a diploma."

"But I suppose it is largely owing to the juniors who failed to pass. How many girls waste their time! And I suppose Miss Morse was delightful?"

"Oh, yes. We are such good friends. I wish she was going to be my superior. I've never felt drawn to Miss Ovis, yet she is an excellent teacher. Only her sarcasms do cut the girls and make them angry. It seems to me they ought to use the best methods of teaching instead of trying to embarrass."

"We shall try to use the best," laughing. "Did Miss Morse and her brother go to Maine?"

"Yes. He is very fond of the water. And





“OH, IT SEEMS GOOD TO GET BACK!” — *Page 168.*







she spent three weeks with him teaching a cooking class of poor women."

"And you?"

"Well, I helped my new sister sew and settle the house and ten days ago they had a little girl born. They were both so glad; so you see girls are welcome."

"I *do* think they are, mostly."

"And I told her about our lovely time. She said it was next to going herself. And we found the places on a railway guide—it was quite like a new journey. The baby is the dearest little thing. And they are so happy. What did you do?"

"Oh, I made the duty visits at Hope and found everybody prospering. I wonder if it is wicked, fickle, to outgrow people? They think it would be fine for me to come back and teach in the high school, but I wouldn't be content to live there. Yet once I should have been proud to do it. I think my cousin Nat improves the most of any one. The farm is splendid and Uncle Jason is the happiest man anywhere about. Fanny is smart and is going to study for a teacher, but Aunt Jane isn't going to let



her fool away four years in college without earning a penny."

"The education isn't only for the money's sake."

Then they wended their way up to the great pile of buildings that had once seemed so formidable, almost lost in the crowd of anxious mothers and sisters and not a few fathers conveying new freshmen.

"Come into the parlor," said Helen. "I want to see the old ordeal."

The center tables were full of papers and pencils, works on education, pocket dictionaries. Girls were writing, asking questions in low tones, and soon a new batch of names were called off. Two or three girls hung back frightened.

"Jest don't you care, Emma Jane," exclaimed a plain countrywoman, in a rather antique costume. The girl had evidently been fitted out with modern store clothes. "Father's trained you and you know it all if you are not afeared. There! go on," with a friendly push.

"My man was bound that Emma Jane should have an education. He sold half the farm to a



syndicate that had bought all the tract at the west. They're going to build a silk mill and bring in a hundred or so families, hoping strikes won't reach 'em here. We've four boys and this is our only girl. I'd rather kept her home and learned her housekeeping, but she was fond of books and husband said she should have her chance. Our oldest boy is in some sort of school with a queer name I always forget, learning engineering and 'lectricity. Queer thing, now, ain't that 'lectricity?

"Made out o' nothin' and no one can tell jest how, and lightin' up the world and sendin' messages. I'd rather Emma Jane would have stayed at home and made a good housekeeper. With your boys goin' off, whose goin' to farm? Hired men ain't hardly worth their keep. And as for hired girls I shan't have one in the house as long as I can crawl."

The rather ornately gowned woman sitting next made no reply, but straightened up her figure with almost a toss of the head. Then a girl who had been crying crossed the room to her.

"It's no good at all," she began, with a sob.



"Oh, let us go home. Everything went out of my head when that sharp-eyed professor looked at me so. See, I didn't answer one thing right all the way through."

"Oh, you poor child, are they so sharp?" asked the countrywoman, but the other rose and sailed out of the room in high dudgeon.

A girl who had been poring over a paper now laid her face down and drew a long sobbing breath. Helen felt sorry for her. Leslie was explaining some matters to the mother of two girls. Helen leaned over. "What is the matter?" she asked, gently.

"Two conditions. I can't get that problem right. And the Latin—I was such a good Latin scholar in the high school. O dear! My head is in a whirl! And there are more and more girls! Do you suppose they will all get in? I just hate geometry. But see how I came 'way up in some other things."

She unfolded her paper before Helen.

"Why, that is really splendid. You almost went in with flying colors. Let us examine the problem."



She had worked at it several different ways and the paper was full of confused blunders.

"See here now. Get a clean paper. I will read it over carefully. I fancy you did not understand it clearly. Follow me and think hard," smiling.

The girl watched with eager eyes.

"Oh, how easy you make it! Are you one of the teachers?" with a little awe in her voice.

"No, I passed in three years and am here for a postgraduate course," returned Helen, pleasantly.

"Oh, I wish you were! I am sure you could make any one learn," and she glanced up gratefully.

"Now do it by yourself." Helen gave her a fresh paper.

She went along bravely for the first half, then her brow knit and she bit the end of her pencil. "Now I am puzzled," she confessed.

"I will let you glance at this. Remember the rules. You will find a thorough knowledge of them useful in all the problems. But you must *think*."

"Oh, how good you are! I've heard college



girls were not very obliging to freshmen and led them astray just for mischief. Is that hazing?"

"I should call it telling what was not true. Now you do this several times over before you go to examination. Let us look at the Latin."

That was not promising. It was part of Cicero's oration and badly bungled. The translation of verse was better.

"You really should have taken more pains, and have done your best work. Oh, see what a muddle of cases. Why, your Greek and Roman history is excellent and your synopsis of American government. A few hours on that Latin with the lexicon will set you all right."

"Oh, I am so much obliged," with a grateful smile.

Leslie nodded to her. "Are you beginning already?" she said mirthfully. "That was a nice, bright girl. And do you see those two over by the window?"

"Those—well, rather *outré* looking ones? I'm afraid college isn't just the place for them.



Yet I am not quite sure what constitutes an intellectual aspect."

"Yes, and I am so sorry for them. I don't know why some girls are bewitched to come to college! They have been working in a factory and saving up money, studying in a correspondence school, and have a lot of passable papers, but, of course, they are not halfway up to the standard. They could not begin to pass. They only want to come for a year. One is engaged to a young minister who hasn't finished his studies. They come from upper New York and want to help support themselves by mending and darning stockings and tidying up rooms, as girls in story-books do. It is real pitiful that they should spend so much money uselessly. I'll see if Miss Morse can't set them straight. And I do wish people wouldn't write such glowing stories that make things seem so easy."

Helen told her about Emma Jane and the girl she was sure had made a great fiasco. They hunted up Miss Morse.

"Bring the girls to my room," she said.

They came in a hesitating manner, as if their courage was oozing out. One was a Miss Jen-



nie Mills, the clergyman's betrothed. Annie Jewett thought if she could have a year in college she could teach school. It was so much more genteel than working in a mill.

Miss Morse ran over the standard for examination. They had only read and translated Latin exercises, but the long list of other studies appalled them. There were books they had never even heard of.

"You would have to take a year in a preparatory school before you could pass the examination," she said, kindly.

"A whole year! Oh, good gracious, Jennie! I wanted to teach next year. I never could have money enough. I'm sure I've heard of places where you could work your way through."

"You could do some tutoring here if you were fitted for it. Yes, there are several institutions of that class, but you would have to stay two or three years to have it amount to anything."

Jennie Mills began to wink the tears out of her eyes. They had talked over their dreams and been so hopeful. It was hard to have their



plans fall to the ground, but as Miss Morse counseled them in a friendly, gracious manner they began to realize the futility of their desires. "Was there no one to advise them?" she asked.

"Well, you see—we had a circular from this Mr. Winship about the correspondence school, and he said it would fit any one for college. Then we wrote and he sent us a lot of work and thought we might get through in a year, but we didn't quite. And it's a so much bigger thing than we imagined. Oh, I don't know what to do. You see, we could work in the mill and study, but if we couldn't be sure of earning our living here——"

"You might go on with the correspondence school. You would learn a good many things. Is there any good school in your neighborhood?"

"Only a district school, and Lizzie Graniss is keeping company and likely will be married next summer, for he's going to build when the spring opens. And I thought if I could get the school! I'm tired of the mill. I'd like something a little higher. O dear! And,



Jennie, think of the money we've spent coming here—just thrown it away."

She wiped her eyes and looked at her friend.

"I should advise you to go back," Miss Morse said, kindly. "If you are the intelligent girls you seem to be, some way may open another year. Getting an education is pretty hard work and requires a good deal of perseverance."

"I don't see any need of so many things. Now there's physics and chemistry, and what is this zoölogy? And we wouldn't want Greek and all these histories and these books—do you have to read them all? Oh, we never could get them. And what is plane geometry? Well—I don't know"—doubtfully. "If we must go back, we may as well start. And we couldn't pay three hundred dollars a year for board. We room together and do our own work and get board for four dollars a week, two apiece. Well, I'm awful sorry we came. You've been very kind, but—but—I think colleges are mostly for rich people."

There was a falter in the voice that touched her small audience.



"Yes," returned Jennie, reluctantly.

"Did you have a trunk?"

"That's at the depot. I wonder if there are any night trains!"

Miss Morse inquired the route and looked up the trains. Yes, with one change they could reach a place called King's Corners at six in the morning. Then they would be home by noon the next day.

"You've been very kind. You see, I felt I must know something more than the common if I was going to marry a minister," and she flushed. "I guess I'll pick it up as I go along and I can study Latin with him afterward. Yes, Annie, we'll get something to eat in that bakery we saw, and a lunch to take along. It's so beautiful here. I'd like to stay, but we can't, and that is all there is about it. Good-by, with a thousand thanks."

"And take our best wishes!" exclaimed Helen.

They looked at each other for some minutes in silence after the friends had gone.

"There was a good deal of real courage in that," began Miss Morse.



"I should like to be rich enough to give them their chance," said Helen, with deep feeling. "Do you remember that Carlyle says somewhere, 'But that one man should die ignorant who had a capacity for knowledge is what I call tragedy.' I suppose it can be applied to a girl or a woman."

"I do not know that it would be a good thing to take them out of their sphere. One girl will probably marry her minister lover and the other's ambition is to be genteel. She will be apt to marry some commonplace man and be averagely happy. You see they have no real thirst for knowledge for its own sake. I am sorry they should have been so misled. These correspondence schools should not hold out such glowing rewards for a little study."

"O dear, that's quite an adventure! I wonder if any of our girls have come. What is this, now?"

A messenger with a note, "Professor Blake would be happy to have Miss Grant and Miss Brooks take a social cup of tea with Mrs. Blake and himself at six o'clock."

"And I've been asked as well," added Miss



Morse. "Girls, yours is a decided compliment."

Then they went to their own section. Seniors were coming in and several hugged Helen in a transport of delight. There was a rushing, rustling, laughing crowd of girls who didn't seem a day over sixteen if one was to judge from their merriment.

To Helen there came a curious sense of ownership pervading every pulse of her being. She was more rejoiced at being back than she had thought possible.

"And I won't consider any separation or the end until I come to it," she said, resolutely.

"What strings of folks are going stationward!" cried some one. "I suppose some of the rejected are among them. A freshman asked me how the President of the United States was elected—it had just gone out of her mind. I guess a good many other things went out of her mind when she met the professor's stern eye."

"O dear! it surely *is* an ordeal," said Helen, thoughtfully. "One ought to know things well and keep one's presence of mind. I believe if I ever should teach I should try first of all to



make girls *think* for themselves. And we have had an experience, too," laughing. "Well, perhaps my plan would not work in all cases. Those poor girls thought for themselves. What a pity there wasn't some one to advise them!"

"Oh, are you here! Are you here!" and a bevy of girls rushed into the room. "You're just an angel to come back, but if I get through safely without honors, you won't catch me haunting these halls of learning. Isn't there something else to take up? Miss Coultas returns and returns like an echo. There was the queerest girl, or woman, or old maid, inquiring where the postgraduate department was. She wore a black alpaca gown that hunched in the back and wrinkled about the neck, and a plain linen collar and sleeves with a point that came over her hands that Noah's daughters-in-law must have invented when they came out of the Ark. It always suggests a turtle's back to me."

Rose Hall paused because breath ran short. The girls said she was like the alarm to a clock—there was no stopping her until she ran down.



"I'm glad you are not going off of this corridor. And you'll stay in athletics——"

Helen shook her head emphatically.

"I've done my duty in that line. I've run and vaulted and jumped and hurdled for the glory of the college, and now I'm going to retire to discreet middle-age life and devote my remaining years to intellectual pursuits."

"Oh! oh! oh!" ejaculated half a dozen voices. "Are you going to wear spectacles? Caps have gone out of date. And will you have that severe line at the apex of your nose—is it the apex?—I've forgotten, but that place where your eyebrows don't meet."

"You'll never grow old, Helen Grant."

"That is werry flatterin' to the soul," laughed Helen.

"Girls, the happiest time in life is from sixteen to twenty. Childhood can't hold a candle to it, for your woes are so intense then and there are so many of them. But you haven't come to real responsibility. You can flirt with a clear conscience, for your parents don't allow you to have any lovers. But when you get in the seniors the responsibility begins. Oh, I'd



like to go back and have all the fun over. Now I shall have to consider which of the learned professions I shall adopt, or whether I shall take to matrimony."

"Or the woods. Young ladies," in a half-mocking tone, "will you please retire? We have an invitation out to tea. We have not yet unpacked our finery or settled upon the gown we shall wear. Adieu, adieu," and Helen made a parting gesture.

"' Let her wave her lily hand,  
With its gesture of command,  
And throw back her raven hair  
With the old imperial air;  
Let her be, as she was then,  
The fairest lady in all the land.'

Helen of—what a pity I can't say Ireland!"

"I'm complimented to have Matthew Arnold quoted to me," returned Helen. "I'll wave my lily hand again."

They filed out, but their voices still sounded in the corridor, though Helen had closed the door.

"Helen, we must read that beautiful Iseult over again. We must take up the poets this winter. We shall not have so many things to



distract our minds. I am an ardent lover of poetry when it is well read."

Then they laid some of their choice belongings in the drawers. Helen always gave her beautiful laces a little pat in memory of Mrs. Van Dorn. They were of so much account to her now.

So they arrayed themselves and called for Miss Morse, but her room was deserted. They went on to the ell, really shut off from the main part of the building, and having another outside entrance. A pleasant voice answered their gentle knock.

This was the pretty sitting-room, tea-room also. Next was the study, shelved almost up to the ceiling and filled with books, a great desk, a large table, and a capacious leather-covered chair, with a lounge in the same russet color.

The sitting-room was pretty and picturesque in harmonies of gold and light brown, with some fine pictures and several lovely statues in marble and bronze, and on the one side flowers all about. Two spice carnations in full bloom scented the room. The reclining chair had a light blue slumber-robe thrown carelessly about



it, and the spacious rocker was covered with blue damask. A screen shut off one corner where a tea table was set out with choice china.

Mrs. Blake was quite an invalid. Early in December she went to Florida, where her brother had an orange grove and a beautiful home, and did not return until about Easter. She welcomed them very cordially. The professor had gone to see the president about something and would soon be in. They did not look as if they were sorry to get back—what had they done with their summer?

She was very fragile looking, with light, wavy hair and gentle blue eyes. One almost wondered how she had come to marry the careless, rather severe professor. They were in the full tide of pleasurable reminiscences when he entered with Miss Morse. Then the maid came in, made the tea, and arranged the table in a dainty manner.

“There is an absolute flood of freshmen this year,” he began. “Some of the schools turn out mighty poor work, or else they have very poor material to work upon. They knew it all



yesterday or last week, and they are sure it will come back to them, and one flippant girl told me 'she had come to college to *learn*; if she had known all these things she wouldn't have needed the four years' study.' I've sent home at least a dozen and conditioned enough to keep me busy for days. It fairly wears one out! You would get discouraged if you did not come across a bright girl now and then. I'm afraid I'm losing patience. I shall beg off from the examining committee next year."

"But it is so much better to have the work thorough in the beginning," rejoined Miss Morse. "I fancy college has become a sort of fad with a good many girls. They have heard so much about the fun, and the way girls slip through."

"But they can only slip through the first year."

"And that makes a good deal of useless trouble," sighed Miss Morse.

"I heard you two young ladies struck a queer case," and a funny expression wrinkled up his face.

"Oh, Miss Morse helped us out. I couldn't



have managed. I felt so sorry for them, and they were so earnest and so——” Helen paused for an adjective.

“Ignorant,” added the elder. “And inexperienced. But they accepted the verdict quite equably. They were appalled at the length of time college training demanded.”

“There was a girl who interested me a good deal,” said Helen. “Her mother was talking to a rather pretentious woman whose daughter was turned down. The father believed in higher education and was willing to spend his money for it. They were country people and her name was Emma Jane. I’d like to know how she made out.”

The professor glanced over a memorandum.

“Emma Jane—Powers. A good student, as far as she goes. Lame and countrified in Latin, but really fine in civics and American government. Think of a young woman telling me ‘she didn’t believe in women’s suffrage and wouldn’t vote anyhow, and the government made no difference to her?’ ” He threw back his head and laughed in an amused fashion. “Miss Powers will need some tutoring in Latin. Good Eng-



lish, fair mathematics, botany, chemistry, physics, history. Three conditions."

"I'm glad to hear that," returned Helen. "She looked like a good, honest, ambitious girl."

"You and Miss Brooks should have been doorkeepers. It would have saved us poor professors some trouble."

"Oh, I couldn't have managed the mothers," laughed Helen.

"I'm glad you decided to come back if you have resolved to teach. It is best to be well equipped," turning his eyes steadily on the girl.

"I can't write a novel, nor paint a picture, nor carve a statue, so I must make my way by main strength," Helen returned, gayly. "Though really there may have been a little cowardice or laziness in not desiring to face the world, putting off the evil day as long as possible," and the mirthful lines made her face still more charming.

"It will not be cowardice," returned the professor, warmly. "We're proud enough when the alumni come back and recount their successes. We have turned out some fine scholars,



I'm glad to say. In a few days we will have a talk about this matter, it's rather too heavy for our tea. Have you two girls learned anything this summer?"

Then they branched off into holiday subjects. The professor was delightfully entertaining, ably seconded by his wife, whose mind kept fresh if her body at times became languid. Helen was surprised at the brightness and lightness of the talk.

"I wish you girls would come in again when you have a little leisure," Mrs. Blake said in a heartfelt fashion. "I'm fond of poetry in plain English, so we might read some together."

"Oh, thank you," and the smile in Helen's eyes made sunshine in the elder woman's heart.



## CHAPTER IX

### FRIENDS OLD AND NEW

THE next day girls thronged in and found their places, changed them for new ones, unpacked and settled while the sifting out went on. Several girls very well equipped mentally went at once to the sophomores. Not a few of them hunted up Helen, among whom were merry Betty Garnier and Miss Vanduyne. Helen and Leslie and some of the teachers went to pay their respects to the president and Helen looked in upon the postgraduates, quite a goodly number. Two girls had been teaching, but wanted some higher training, were aglow with eagerness to take up this or that course.

There was the new inmate the girls in the audacity of youth and prettiness had laughed about. Helen passed her several times, merely nodding. She was not an attractive person. A rather sallow complexion, dark hair, combed plainly above her ears, an ordinary nose, a



mouth where the lips shut in a determined fashion that was severe. She looked neither old nor young. The second day she was in a brown stuff dress that did not fit so badly but looked rather worn. She had one of the small rooms by herself, and warm as it was she kept her door shut. Leslie found on the register she was a Miss Elizabeth Carr. She took a seat at the end of the table with several vacancies on each side, although two had a card "engaged."

There was a rush in Helen's room just at the close of the second day, and two arms were flung about her neck.

"Oh, you dear, dear darling! I've been just wild this past fortnight lest something would happen to prevent my coming. And it did nearly. Think—papa's sister has gone to Washington to live, her husband has a government position. Eugene went up to see them. And she wrote to advise mamma to send me to her and let me take a year's convent training and then be introduced into society! Papa was frightened about the convent, but mamma was quite in favor. I had some awful days. I cried and went on and said I would come here or run





TWO ARMS WERE FLUNG ABOUT HER NECK. — *Page 192.*







away, and when they found that my heart was so set upon it they gave in. They had promised I might come for the whole course if I wanted to, you know. And it is so dismal at home. The boys I used to know have gone away, there isn't a soul to have any nice times with. Eloise has a baby and she just doesn't care about anything else. Then papa came across some old Latin poems that are very rare, I believe, and he is translating them for some publisher. Oh, I couldn't go on living there—it would kill me!”

“And did you tell your parents——”

“About Willard? Oh, no. We were not to say anything until Christmas, you know. If it had not been for his dear letters and that lovely one of yours, and Mrs. Bell wrote the sweetest things. I told mamma about her and the charming visit at Grey Court, and my dear, dear Helen! Oh, I wonder if Willard and I will be like that, not really caring whether you know other people or not. The country folks come once in a while to call, but papa thinks it a bore. They are not—well, I suppose it is intelligent. Oh, you can't imagine the utter dearth



—I wonder how I could have been so happy. I was like a little bird in a nest, but when his wings grow he is out in the golden air, flits from tree to tree, and answers other birds and sails over miles of country and never comes back to the old nest. I shall go back—sometimes, but Willard couldn't live in any such place. Oh, I'm a million times glad to be here and see the girls and have the good times, and—and," blushing, "have Willard to love me. Don't you know, the Bible says he shall leave his parents and cleave to his wife, and if it wasn't right—but I shouldn't want Willard to leave his mother. She is so sweet and fond of him and me."

"Yes, I am glad you are back. Have you done anything about your room?"

"Mrs. Means wrote. I have the number in my card case. Oh, I'm a sophomore now. Papa was pleased about that. He said he was afraid I would never get out of the freshman class," laughing merrily. "And he said the songs did very well for a girl, but had no real depth in them. Do you want songs to be learned and deep and prosy? All the same I



think he was gratified. O dear! I am so happy. Willard is coming up in a fortnight."

Helen was confused as to the right and wrong of the case, but the child's joy was too great to mar.

"Let us go and inspect your room. Have you studied any?"

"Oh, I couldn't. First, I was miserable and lonesome. I wanted to think of Willard all the time and the lovely walks and talks at Miss Craven's. Don't scold."

Helen put her arm around Shirley and they walked out together. The campus was alive with girls.

They found the room small, neat, with two white beds. The trunk had been sent up. Helen looked at the card—Ruth Challis.

"She's nice, I think. Her hair is red and the girls said she had a temper. But I'm so happy at being here I shan't quarrel with anybody."

"Where are your keys? I'll help you settle."

Shirley prattled on. Helen shook out gowns and hung them in the closet, filled up the shoe rack, laid the finer articles and lingerie in the



drawers, took out books and the traps so dear to a girl's heart. Several of her mates came in and greeted her cordially. Then Helen left her, for the dinner bell would soon send forth its summons.

On her own table she found several letters, one from Willard which she opened first. She had received one at Hope full of lovers' rhapsodies.

This was in a more earnest strain. Shirley was no doubt with them now. She had not had a happy summer, poor child! He was afraid her parents did not appreciate such a delicious bit of humanity. She was so different from most girls, a sort of elfin fairy that needed sunshine and love and tenderness. Would she, Helen, be a dear friend and counsellor and watch over her? She was so innocent, she knew so little of the real world. He had never met any one with such a pure, simple, and unworldly nature. She was like a sweet rosebud that could unfold beautifully under kindly and proper influence. Helen was so strong and reliant, her experience had been so much wider and they had been such good trusty friends



that he should feel his adorable darling was in the best of hands until he could claim her.

A curious flood of resentfulness swept over Helen. This year was to be peculiarly hers, in which she was to gather the rich fruits of knowledge and bind them in sheaves for her life's trophies. She did not want this eager, romantic, excitable child flung on her, a burden. She did not want to listen continually to the enthusiastic praises of one who had once believed himself so in love with herself. Shirley had not been an absolute charge before, now she was. She, Helen, had consented to all this; she must take up her burden; she must listen to these romantic idealisms, these flights into the dreamland of lovers, to temper them, and yet not be a disagreeable Mentor, to sow that another might reap, when there was her own garden to look after, her own plans to formulate.

After dinner there came the chapel service that formally opened the semester. A very earnest prayer and then a short address by the president, in which he welcomed the new students and commended them to the cordial care



and interest of those who had passed through this ordeal and he trusted been made larger of mind and more generous in their care for each other's welfare. They must not forget there was a duty owing to their neighbor in good fellowship, in the unfolding of the younger lives. Then he spoke of the work for the coming year and hoped each girl would feel that she had a duty not only to her preceptors, but to the college in which she was enrolled, to support its dignity and all the truths for which it stood. There were girls who were deeply touched and wiped their eyes, while the voices quivered a little in the beautiful hymn of welcome and "Abide with Me" that was always sung on opening night. Then he went to the doorway and bowed to the procession of girls as they passed out two by two.

Shirley waited at the door.

"Oh, can't I come in your room a little while?" she pleaded, in her soft, entreating tone.

"Why, Shirley!" exclaimed Leslie. "I am very glad to see you. Oh, yes, come if you are not too tired."



"Thank you. It all seems so strange." She took Helen's hand and they walked along the few steps. "We are in the old place." Leslie wondered that Helen did not speak, but she said presently: "I saw Shirley an hour or two ago and helped her settle her room."

As they entered their own room some one rose. "Oh, Helen! Oh, Leslie!" the voice said.

"Lorraine, my dear! Why, we had given you up."

"There was a detention. I was too tired to come into chapel, so I just had a cup of tea and came in here. I was sorry to miss the welcome and the lovely comforting prayer, but I really could not take another step. There was an accident and we had to wait for the track to be cleared. I was a little frightened at first, but we were in no danger. Oh, how do you do? Why, it really appears like home after cavorting round. Girls, we do not seem to rest a bit in vacation. Oh, Shirley!" in a careless tone, as if they might have parted an hour ago.

Leslie sat down beside the child, and Shirley caught her hand.



"And, of course, you had a nice time?" asserted Helen, smiling to Lorraine.

"Well, I've seen some beautiful places and queer people—some nice ones as well. Father thinks travelers, or rather tourists, ought to pack up their peculiarities in the spare chamber of their houses when they go to view the world. Does any one care what they can or can't eat or drink? Or, have food cooked in some peculiar way, or why you always wear your second-best clothes when you are journeying about? And the mothers talk about their daughters, what they know and whether they have lovers or not. We met one woman who considered her daughter a paragon, she was so intellectual. She wrote the finest essays at her high school. She didn't care for parties nor the frivolities of life and she thought the young men of the day so vapid and tiresome, they could talk of nothing but the ball score and golf and the crack athletes. She would like her to go to college if they were not full of fads and the girls were not giving teas and spreads and all manner of foolish things, even to making candy in their rooms. I was so thankful father didn't say,



'My daughter here is in college,' or she would have turned me inside out and perhaps have extracted my eye-teeth. But there were some lovely people, too. We had such a nice time with a newspaper correspondent. Father found out that he had known his father as a boy. And the young fellow was quite acquainted with that Miss Bisland who started to go round the world in less than eighty days, you remember. Helen, you would make a good newspaper correspondent. But I think the visit at Grey Court was among some of the very best. How are they all and those charming twins? and oh, I do want to see Miss Morse."

Shirley rose with a pretty dignity. "Good night," she said. "I must run home." Then she stooped and kissed Helen.

"And now we are the three graces again," began Lorraine. "We mustn't let any one come in between. We can go out and do kindly things. Oh, were there many new freshmen?"

"We can hardly tell until to-morrow. A crowd went into examination. But you look



tired to death, dear. You ought to go to bed this minute."

"Yes, I must. Oh, a loving good-night and sweet be your dreams. Think what I shall have to do this year! Remember me in your orisons."

There was a good deal of confusion the next day getting settled into places, exhuming books and being appalled at the forgotten things. Leslie was very busy, Miss Ovis was explaining duties in a dogmatic manner and the necessity of being sharp at the outset. Helen was electing some studies that Professor Blake had marked out, greeting old associates and trying to be friendly with three new girls who had come from other colleges. Miss Carr was very stiff and distant.

"She has just come to study," whispered Elsie Dixon. "She graduated four years ago and has been teaching in a western seminary, but wants a first-class degree. Isn't she a fright! But she's high up, passed a first-class examination. O dear, there really ought to be another study added—'On the gentle art of making the best of yourself physically and socially.'"



"Oh," said another (four or five girls had made a circle in the corner where Helen had gone to arrange the new course of study), "we have a new professor of chemistry."

"Why, that's newly sprung on us. Where's Professor Folger?"

"Why, about a month ago he was asked to join some great clique or order or something in Paris. It was too good to decline, Prexy admitted. And he recommended a Professor Yarrow, who is a high-up chemist and hails from Columbia. He has married a second wife, a young woman who has been president of a western college for two years. Not that she loved teaching less but matrimony more. And they are going to keep house in Tulip Cottage."

"Rose Weston, how do you learn everything about everybody?"

"I keep my eyes and ears open and I occasionally ask questions. It's a bit here and a bit there and I shake them up and let them simmer. Part of this was announced to the juniors of the chemistry class and they were exhorted to do their best work."

"I do wonder what *she* is like. Yarrow—a



common wayside weed. Simple at first—that was in her babyhood, I suppose. Leaves twice pinnatifid, heads many-flowered, made up of both ray and disk-flowers. A composite plant having a strong odor and pungent taste.”

“And it is added to beer, rendering it more intoxicating, I believe.”

“Oh, good gracious! Where did you get that wisdom!” Some of the girls looked astonished.

“Why, Sweden terms it the field hop and it is considered stronger than real hops. And the old women in the Orkneys make tea of it, believing it dispels melancholy. And I am sure the flower is pretty.”

“Any other virtues, Miss Grant?”

Helen considered, then smiled. “Why, among the old legends is the one that Achilles used it to cure the wounds of his soldiers. And it is supposed to be named after him—*Achillea Millefolium*.”

“I do declare! Helen Grant, where did you pick up so many interesting bits of knowledge? I think sometimes you must have been reincarnated and remembered.”



"I learned that when I was a little girl in a country town. The library had a book of odd legends. And I always liked yarrow after that, it stood up so straight and tall and a group of it looks like a phalanx of soldiers."

"Why, I shall begin to respect yarrow. And the green leaves are almost as pretty as ferns."

"And there's the 'banks and braes of Yarrow.' The banks are the professor, I suppose, the braes the feminine side," said another girl, with a mock-solemn intonation. "Girls, do you suppose she will be added to the college staff?"

"Has been president of a college——"

"In a state where the women vote."

"Then she is a suffragist and strong-minded."

"Has any one seen her?"

There were silence and shakes of the head.

"I just hated Professor Folger when I was a freshman. And, oh dear! chemistry was like the seven plagues to me.  $H_2O$  sounded like a cereal to me. All the letters with the little figures between nearly turned my brain. When he looked at you so sharply my blood ran down



in my body and left my brain an arid desert. You see, these wise people who know it all have forgotten when *they* were new to it. If Miss Wright hadn't been so good to me I could not have gone on. But when the professor was explaining these wonderful combinations that sound like fairy stories, and what develops this or that, and what will stay separate and distinct, I became so interested and absolutely began to like him. And now we must get used to new ways, for no two teachers are ever alike."

"Girls—the last and fatal hour has come and I must go to my higher analysis and see how far I have progressed in the theory of 'Functions of the Real and Complex Variables.' That branch is for the seniors, supposed to have acquired its mysteries, yet they ask you questions you don't know anything about. And some people think going through college is a mere bagatelle!" and she gave a groan as she turned away.

"I liked Professor Folger very much," remarked Helen. "I wish he had stayed my term out."



"It will be funny to have a man and his wife living in Tulip Cottage. Yarrows at that!"

It had been given this name on account of a very large handsome tulip poplar that quite overshadowed it.

"Extremes meet. The lofty with the lowly."

Helen left them to discuss some plans with regard to the studies Professor Blake had recommended. The other girls were busy as well. There was a great deal of confused talking and not a little disappointment. Getting up in a class was all very fine on Commencement Day when one had praises and plaudits, but new studies and new preceptors took away the buoyant delight. They began to feel again as if they knew very little and had started at the wrong end of everything. And when recreation hour came there were knots of girls on the campus and in the walks talking, gesticulating, frowning, some with tears in their eyes, others laughing and declaring "they did not care, they were not going to worry, but put off the evil day as long as possible."

Helen went over to a freshmen group that appeared rather disconsolate. She recalled



some of the faces as she had seen them go out or come in from their examination. Yes, the new home must seem strange to them if they had left family circles. She fancied now that she must have been of a rather adventurous turn, but then there had been changes in her life and no one home that it had cost her a pang to give up. How lovely Leslie Brooks had been to her! And did she not have a duty here, to give a welcome to these strangers and not pass by on the other side?

It was a splendid afternoon and the flower beds were full of rich autumnal bloom, the trees had scarcely begun to turn. Some of the sophomores had their bicycles out on the path, there were merry groups laughing, girls three abreast with their arms around each other, here boxes of bonbons were being passed about; indeed, it was a fascinating, youthful picture.

"Are you all newcomers?" Helen asked, in her light, cheery tone.

They glanced at each other in a frightened manner.

"You—you're not one of the teachers—you look so young? Where I was at school they



had monitors——” and the girl flushed up to the roots of her hair, as if she might have been too forward.

“No, I passed my senior examination last year, but I wanted to go on another year. Sometime I hope to teach,” she returned cordially, in the old cheerful voice that had won her so many friends.

“It’s all so different. And there are so many girls,” in a hopeless kind of fashion. “And some way I do not seem to have had the right training. I graduated at the high school and then had a year at the seminary. But the examination seemed to turn me round and things went out of my mind. I have two conditions to make up. Oh, I shall just go crazy on chemistry. And my history was dreadful. I was so confused.

“I had the Regent’s examination and think it was very mean not to have it accepted all the way through.”

“Rules are different in almost any institution,” and there was a touch of encouragement in the smile and the tone. “And when you get finally settled I believe you will like it.”



"I'm homesick. I cried nearly all night. I thought girls had a good deal of fun. And I think I shall beg father to let me come home. It was mother who was bound to have me come because one of my cousins has been in college two years, and her folks are not nearly so well off as ours. I shouldn't teach, so I don't see the need of knowing so much," and the girl dabbed at the tears on her cheeks.

"I wonder if your name is Miss Powers?" and Helen turned to a bright, sensible-looking girl with fair hair and rosy cheeks.

"Oh, how did you come to guess that?" and a delighted smile made a dimple in one cheek.

"I was in the reception room and heard your name called. Your mother was talking to a lady."

"Poor, dear mother! I'm the only girl, and somehow it didn't seem just right to go away. But father said I should have a first-class education. He intends to move to a city sometime and he thinks women are going to take a hand in a good many reforms and that they are just as worthy of educating as boys, if they can take it in. Father is so good to us all, rather strict



the boys think at times, and he says he will not have me spoiled by over-indulgence."

Helen liked Emma Jane Powers at once, a good deal because she made no reference to their pecuniary position.

"Don't you want to come over here and see the running? You must either run or walk or take some kind of exercise."

"Oh, how good you are! Two of the girls were very snippy this morning when I asked them something. Yes," said Emma Jane, "let us go."

They went through the walk where the trees met overhead.

"Oh, there are two girls waltzing!" cried another; "I'm just crazy about waltzing. And here is such a long lovely sweep."

"Oh, could we?" and Miss Powers looked up eagerly.

"Why, of course," and Helen smiled.

"I'm used to the man's side," said Miss Powers.

She was considerably taller than the other girl, and they just suited. They went at a slow beautiful pace, as if they were keeping time to



music. Out beyond in the circle several girls were playing tag, others running, jumping, and fairly shrieking with laughter.

"That's what my mother would call regular tomboying!" exclaimed one of the other girls in the group. "She would be shocked to know they did such things at college."

She was a nice prim-looking girl and her clothes fitted with the utmost precision. Her abundant hair was brushed straight above her ears and braided in a great coil at the back. There was propriety in every line of her face.

Some of the girls paused to watch Miss Powers and her mate. They were much more graceful than the other couples. Helen was really pleased with the attention they attracted.

"Hello, Helen Grant!" cried a merry voice. "Oh, must I begin to say *Miss Grant*," with a pretty mischievous curl to her lips; "since you are one of the high-ups?" and Betty Garnier laughed merrily. "Please tell me who that tall girl is who waltzes so divinely. Isn't that the poetry of motion?"

"A Miss Powers, a new freshman. And



here are some others. We all began here ourselves and were glad of a friendly welcome."

Betty bowed and shook hands cordially.

"I dare say you'll find it pretty hard at first unless you go into athletics. Heels are almost of as much account as heads. Though, Miss Grant, don't you think they keep a pretty even pace at first? A supple mind in a supple body—there's a new quotation, or motto, or adage for you! Here comes your friend, introduce me."

Miss Powers was a little abashed at first, but Betty was so bright and amusing. Then she carried the two girls off and beckoned the others to follow, as Shirley Chardavoyne flung both arms about Helen. They moved off reluctantly.

"I've looked everywhere for you. This is the first time I have seen you to-day. And I've been sort of homesick. Lessons are so difficult and there are so many of them. I'd rather write verses—I don't mind translating, though I do run away from the text and get too flowery."



"But, Shirley, you must try to keep up with your class. Willard would want you to."

"Well—I don't know," doubtfully. "I'm almost sorry I'm in the sophomores."

"But you see all his family are well educated and he wouldn't want you to fall behind."

"Oh—well, if he wants to we can go over some things after—after we are together. He can make a Greek scholar of me if he likes. But I never shall understand differential calculus, and chemical analysis winds me all up yet. Oh, Helen, I just want to sit and dream and write verses to him. I wouldn't have come back but for the pleasure of being that much nearer to him."

"I thought you were lonely at home." Helen's tone was rather judicial.

"Oh, I was! I was! But it was being so far away from him. It does make a difference."

"Shirley, remember you owe a little duty to your parents. Your father is spending his money for your education and he knows of no reason why you should not study. Then your coming is equivalent to saying to the college faculty, 'You have been patient with me and



given me two years in the freshman class and thought me worth promoting.' Do you not believe you ought to do your best?"

Shirley pouted a little.

"He said you would love me and be like a sister to me; that I was to come to you when I felt lonely or discouraged. Do you dislike my being engaged to him? Oh, I really believe you do not love me any more."

Shirley began to cry softly. A tear fell on Helen's hand.

"My dear little girl, I love you and I am glad of the great happiness you are going to have. But I do not want you to spend your time and energies in these vague dreams and longings and really weaken your mind for any earnest purpose. You are going out of girlhood and coming into a happy womanhood, I trust. You will have some duties and you must fit yourself for them. I do not think Willard would enjoy a childish wife in the years to come. You must not nullify his manliness. In some ways you must keep step with him, for he is ambitious. It need not be Latin or Greek, but the general intelligence that never shames a



man or makes people wonder at his choice. And you can come to me when you have tried your best at your tasks. That is what you are here for, to learn. I've had some of the new freshmen on my hands, I shall have a good deal to do this year. There, have I tired you with this long sermon?"

"If you will only love me. I know I am not high up in intellectuality but I love you dearly."

Helen kissed her tenderly.



## CHAPTER X

## A CHANGE IN PROFESSORS

"AN afternoon tea and reception at the president's. The seniors, postgraduates, and the teachers are all invited—to meet Professor and Mrs. Yarrow."

"Well, I am rather curious to see her," said Leslie.

"Dear me, we are on the honor list," laughed Lorraine. "I haven't had chemistry yet, and only the merest glimpse of the professor's back. His coat was rather shiny, but it fitted well. And I want to see the woman president as well."

"Do you suppose she will be very strong-minded?"

"At times I feel like honoring strong-minded women,—girls, I mean," and Helen laughed, yet there was a shade of annoyance in the usual cheery sound. "I want them to learn to depend somewhat on themselves, to have some opinions



without being obstinate. I don't want to hear a girl say, when I've taken pains to reason out a matter to her, 'Yes, that is just what I think about it,' and then finding her doing something quite different the next day. You feel as if you had thrown away your good labor."

"Helen, you must not grow austere or autocratic. When you can't bring girls up to your level intellectually you must consider what good points you can find in them, and strengthen those. I do believe that little Chardavoyne girl worries you. She does go about like one in a dream and her recitations are quite dreadful."

"She is on my mind. I can't seem to decide how much is her due, because—well, because Willard Bell has in a way put her in my charge. O dear, I wish there were no lovers in the world!"

"Don't, Helen; I am partly counting on having a lover some day myself."

"Oh, is there any one?" Helen's face was all alight with interest.

"No, not at present. But I should want your sympathy. Perhaps I might be foolish."



"Oh, you darling!" She studied her as if she could look through to her future. "I hope one will come—I can't think suddenly what he must be like to win my girl of girls——"

"Oh, what are you going to wear? Must we be dressed up very much?" cried Lorraine, flying into the room. "I've been puzzling over the history of sculpture, photographs, and casts, and what not. I don't admire old art. I went to the lecture and made notes—you see, I'll have to write a paper, and explain what those old Egyptians and Assyrians did for it and their influence. Give me the lovely, warm, glowing Greek, where the faces look as if you could run and kiss them."

"But you had Greek art in the juniors."

"I wouldn't mind going over it again." I wish we could wear Greek drapery. Some one wrote about a woman where the modiste took yards and yards of some beautiful stuff and wound her in it, and draped her and pinned her and made her royally beautiful."

"Have you the stuff?" asked Leslie, gravely.

"No, and you haven't the genius, though you



can drape a curtain to perfection. But that hasn't sleeves and contours and what not."

Leslie laughed. "May I choose your gown? No, I believe it is a frock you wear to a reception. Not severely tailor-made, either."

"Go on—wherewithal shall I be clothed?"

"In your lovely blue lansdowne. You look angelic in it."

"Thank you, my dear Leslie. You don't often fling about such royal compliments."

"I keep them for state occasions," with a tender gleam in her eyes.

"And what shall Helen wear?"

"White. That pretty thing with the tiny silk leaves that look as if they were embroidered."

"That was a birthday gift from Miss Craven."

"And she said you were too proud to take anything much." Leslie gave a dubious smile.

Helen flushed, but an enchanting sweetness hovered about her lips as she returned—

"To the half of her fortune. I draw the line there. And now what shall Leslie wear?"

"Oh, that pretty gauzy thing, over the pale green silk!" exclaimed Lorraine.



"There is no fear of *our* being overdressed. Girls, I sometimes wish we didn't want to look quite so fine when I see some of the poorer girls."

Helen had often thought of that. When they were all arrayed, some of the juniors came in to look at them and were exuberant in their admiration. Then, excusing herself, she slipped away a moment, ran along the corridor, and tapped at Miss Carr's door.

"What is wanted?" said an unwilling voice, that was not positively ungracious.

Helen opened the door gently.

"Oh!" as if in surprise. "Are you not going to the reception? I came to see if you would not like to go with us?"

Helen had been revolving this in her mind for the last five minutes. She did not really want to do it, but she thought it a duty.

Miss Carr sat with a black shade over her eyes, writing on some exercises. Her lips were tightly closed, her face had a rather resentful expression.

"I am here to study. I have no time for society," was the rather curt answer.



"But this is quite unusual. One can't be blamed for not going to the teas—the seniors always give one to the freshmen to welcome the new girls and make them feel that we are, after all, one family—kind if not kin. The president seldom gives anything like this until the close of the year. This is to welcome Professor and Mrs. Yarrow."

"I'm not a regular student, you know; an outsider, I may say. I shall go my way at the end of the year. I do not expect to make friends; indeed, in my busy life I have no time or use for friends. Then," with some unnecessary bitterness, "I have no party gown. I shouldn't want to disgrace you all. Oh, I know the stress people lay upon appearances. I'm not rich enough to indulge in finery, even if I had a taste for it, which, thank Heaven, I have not."

The tone had been unemotional, as well as unpleasant. Now Miss Carr took up her pen again.

"I'm sorry," Helen said, gently. "There will be some guests that I think you would like to meet."



Then she turned away. Had she done what was right and best? Somehow she had truly pitied Miss Carr's loneliness. She was a very good, exact scholar; she never missed a recitation, her papers were concise, to the point, but they lacked wide range, spontaneity. She seemed utterly indifferent to her surroundings, she took her walks with a book in hand, she answered all overtures rather curtly. So even her own classmates had ceased to make any further attempts.

The girls donned their long wraps and started out. Freshmen and sophomores were having a merry time on the campus. It was really good and joyous to be young and thoughtless. Some one had said: "It is given to us when we are young to view things youngly." Youth was very sweet. Helen meant to hold on to it as long as she could.

The spacious drawing-room was quite full, and there was an overflow in the inviting library, with its soft, warm brown, that showed gleams of red in the evening light, and had book shelves all around, with choice pictures, busts, and small pieces of statuary.



Miss Gordon, fair, rosy, and rather stout at forty, who had been teacher of ancient history for the last seven years, was in the receiving line. Mrs. Jordan, sweet and gracious, with snowy, wavy hair, looked elegant in her black lace dress. She had no daughters and her two sons were away, but she was very fond of girls. Mrs. Yarrow stood next. They had been really curious to see her—the president of a successful, if not very large, college.

Mrs. Yarrow was thirty-five, but she could easily have discounted five years. A rather plump figure, a bright, earnest, almost merry face, that dimpled fascinatingly when she smiled. There was nothing bookish or pedantic about her, no air of superiority or profoundness calculated to impress the throng with awe. Her voice was cultivated, inspiriting, sympathetic, and she was really gay, as the girls who felt drawn to her at once decided.

The professor was ten years older than his wife and looked every year of it, though he had a fine intellectual face, with dark eyes that might put on a rather severe aspect, if it was required. He was clean-shaven and thin about



the lower part of the face, but he had a kindly and gracious smile.

There was no real formality, and after the presentation part was over, the guests began to float about the room. Many of the feminine staff had come to do honor to their new confrère and mingled cordially with the seniors and the graduates as they went out to the tea room, sweet with flowers and beautiful with sparkling glass and exquisite china.

Several girls were in a group in the corner, sipping Russian tea and talking just above their breath.

"I don't see how she came to marry him," said Eunice Howe, one of the graduate girls. "He is almost old enough to be her father. Not but that he may be nice enough, but if I was president of a college, and being invited round to high-up gatherings, I'd be very careful whom I married. Why, she was one of the speakers at a great educational meeting at San Francisco."

"She looks jolly and comfortable. I'd like to know her real well, and hear her talk when it wasn't a great meeting," said another with a



laugh. "And next week it's our turn with the professor. I've grown accustomed to Professor Folger, and I hate changes. I don't like laboratory work, either; it's so messy."

"Oh, hasn't she a pretty laugh!"

Mrs. Yarrow had been making her way around the long tea-table, chatting affably with some of the teachers. The girls ceased discussing her and drew closer together. Then to their surprise she came straight over to them.

"This is Miss Brooks, I believe. I heard you had begun your career on the round of the ladder that so many of us strive to mount. I hope you are going to like teaching. One is, I think, more of a success when one loves it than when one works from a sense of duty."

"I am in one of my favorite studies, history. Though it isn't very inspiring to correct badly written and ungrammatical sentences, and occasionally such a piecing together of incidents that you want to laugh. But then I have half forgotten some of my freshman facts and dates."

"Yes. One goes on and leaves some things behind. Mere memory is not everything. And



we find it difficult to make young students think, to quicken minds into activity. But I dare say we have been there ourselves, and a bit of cherry-colored ribbon about a girl's neck, or a slant of sunshine dancing in a window, demolished a train of thought, and we had to go back. So after awhile we get to be more lenient. But I think to-day education is made more interesting. Teachers deal out knowledge in a more attractive fashion."

"But it is the same hard old facts, even if they have a thin coating of sugar," laughs one of the seniors. "You have to dig way down."

"True, the gold doesn't always lie on the top. But I fancy we learn to prize the things that have cost us considerable trouble and labor, though first we must compare and choose only those that are truly so to us."

"But you have to study straight along if you want to graduate," in a rather complaining tone.

"It enlarges your habits of thought and effort. What a lovely home you have here! One of my teachers graduated from here, and she



was never weary of describing its delights. I used to wish I had been a girl here. I'm sure I shall like it very much, and above all things I hope you will be friendly and run in and see me. I mean to have a nice, bright home. I've never had a real home, and now I shall set about making one. And I hope you will like your new professor as well. He has spent most of his years with boys, but I think he has experienced a change of heart," and she laughed merrily.

"Mrs. Yarrow," called some one, and she had to turn, nodding cordially to them.

"Isn't she sweet! Her voice is just charming. And for once, Leslie, you were the one to carry off the honor of special recognition. It's nearly always Helen Grant. Oh, you don't mind, Helen?" in a deprecating tone.

Helen smiled cordially. "Why, I was afraid every moment she'd address me as my father's daughter. You see what it is to be handicapped in the race."

"Oh, nonsense! As if you didn't get lots of love on your own account."

Mrs. Jordan met them presently and they had



some merriment about the election discussion of a past term.

"I hope you are going to like your new professor," she said. "Miss Grant, we heard that you did some fine work in chemistry last year. There is a girl teaching it at Barnard."

"Oh, thank you for the compliment."

"And we are all charmed with Mrs. Yarrow. I am glad the cottage is going to be a real home, instead of a sort of men's rendezvous."

They had a pleasant time with the new juniors and the teachers laid aside their dignity. Presently the company began to thin out, one and another saying good-by to the hostess.

"Which girl is Helen Grant?" Professor Yarrow asked of his wife. "Dr. Jordan has been telling me what a scholar her father was—connected with the great Museum at London. I've seen some of his work. He deciphered some cylinders that had puzzled savants. And he was in the East several years. Genius doesn't run in families, I know, but I'd like to meet her."

"She is a nice, bright, wholesome-looking



girl. She carried off the freshman prize, and Dr. Jordan says she is really a superior student."

They looked for her, but Helen had gone.

The girls talked about the tea most of the evening, gathered in Leslie's room.

"And to think what fun we made of the name, but I'm really glad to know that about Achilles. And I like her. I wish she was going to teach here."

The very next day the girls had sprigs of yarrow in their rooms, though the "weed" had almost blossomed itself out.

Among the new girls Helen took a very earnest liking to Miss Powers. She was bright and wholesome, ready for fun and a thoroughly good student, interested in almost all branches. Then she was very modest about her father's standing, and although she dressed well and was supplied with money enough to pay her way in the little pleasures, sometimes to stand treat, she never boasted.

She said to Helen: "You are so nice and cordial. I don't mind confessing to you. I'm a real ignoramus about social life, and those fine



little rules the girls seem to understand so well. You see, we live in a small country town, where the people have very little education in the niceties of life, as I call them. I went away to school, and my girl friends at home accused me of 'putting on airs' because I pronounced words correctly. Father wants me to be educated so that I can go anywhere, and when I am through we shall live in some city, he says. Oh, I do like it here! Everything is so delightful."

"I am glad you enjoy it and that you are a good student. I had a splendid time my first year, and after that it is pleasanter, if such a thing can be. And you had better try for the prize."

"A prize?" with an amazed expression.

"Oh, look over the official circular. I can't remember all the things. You are a pretty good scholar."

"I've kept up to the mark so far," with a gratified smile. "But it isn't as hard for me as for some girls. My room-mate studies and studies, and then the answers seem to go out of her mind just at the moment. I feel so sorry



for her. I'd almost give her part of my memory—not quite, I suppose,” with a naïve mingling of desire and doubt. “And how delightful the little dances are and the merry meetings in each other's rooms!”

“Do not find them too fascinating,” cautioned Helen.

For her own part, Helen was finding much enjoyment also. It seemed to her that she had only begun at the fountain of learning, and that she had hardly understood the true richness of education. The diploma was but an open door to greater things.

There were evenings when Leslie had finished correcting exercises, and Miss Ovis was quite ready to cavil at times—when Lorraine was at liberty, and they read poems they loved, for in this matter tastes were quite similar. The seniors took to calling them “the three graces.”

Helen began to wonder if she was doing her full duty to those around her. She could make more leisure for them, for her studies were fewer in number and she was so well grounded. She felt sorry for Miss Carr. The girls made ridiculous rhymes about her. True, she took no



pains to improve her personal appearance. Her shabby brown dress, with the plain linen collar, came to the table with undeviating regularity six days of the week; on the seventh the black one went to church, as it was expected that every student would do that once a day. She joined no societies or clubs. She never came to the musical service after evening prayers, which was Helen's great delight. And there were so many interesting talks about books, new novels and old ones, and the trend of the day in moral and physical welfare, of what women were doing here and there, that inspired these college girls.

It did seem as if Miss Carr should be in some of it. Would not the solitude tend to make one narrow, certainly indifferent to the sympathetic interest that moved the world?

She recalled Katherine Rowena Kent, and remembered what Celia Logan's friendliness had done for her. But there was real love back of it. Could any one love Miss Carr with that distrustful look in her eyes?

And then, Shirley, who was wayward and almost petulant by turns.



"You don't really care about me now," she said one day, rather resentfully. "You Three Graces are so taken up with yourselves. And you seem so much older, but there is a great distance between a foolish little sophomore and a graduate. And Willard thinks I must be so happy because you are here, and you might be a hundred miles away for any real comfort you are to me."

The pretty eyes overflowed with tears. They were loitering down one of the winding paths in the October sunshine that seemed almost like May. Helen had sought her out—she had been hearing about poor recitations and frolics in her room with all sorts of gayeties.

Had she been quite right when she had encouraged Willard's fancy for this inconsequent child? Yet last year she had been so sweet, so promising. She had been drawn into a circle of the gayest and most indifferent of the sophomores, who were occasionally reprimanded for their inattention. Helen had heard some things that troubled her.

"I do not think you are doing quite what Willard would approve," she began, gravely,



yet with a certain sweetness that was very winsome.

"And Willard has gone away for ever and ever so long—no one knows——" and the tears flooded her eyes. "He was to come, you know——"

So that was one trouble.

"Where has he gone?" Helen asked.

"Oh, Mr. Loring took him off—somewhere South. He might have come just one day, I think——"

"Shirley, I want you to try to understand how necessary it is for a young man beginning life to take advantage of a good business opening when it is put right in his way. It will be for your benefit as well. This Mr. Loring has some trouble with his eyes, and while he is well and capable, needs a secretary to attend to the important writing. He seems to have grown fond of Willard, who is a fine, ambitious fellow, trusty and upright. You do not want to spoil his career by any selfish desires. I think you can trust him to the uttermost. I dare say he was as much disappointed as you. Come, can you not make some allowance and be a



brave little girl? I am afraid you have been wearing on your nerves by the dissipations you have dropped into, and the reprimands for imperfect lessons. Some of the girls put fun first. Occasionally some one is dropped. I have heard a whisper that the sophomore class is not quite up to the mark."

"But—I couldn't have you. You care so much for those other girls," and now Shirley was sobbing.

"We are all older. You were such a sweet, cheerful little girl when you first came here."

Helen slipped her arm around the small figure that was trembling with nervous trepidation, for she knew Shirley had a touch of conscientiousness at bottom. And did she not have some duty here? Sunday's sermon flashed across her mind. It had been on personal responsibility, and the text was, "Could ye not watch with me one hour?" Christ needed no watching with now. He had borne His great trial and entered into the rest provided for all who followed Him. But He had left the duty of watching for His disciples. Watching over



the weak, those likely to go astray, those who could not see clearly, those who were disconsolate, or depressed, or ignorant. If Shirley had succumbed to the allurements of pleasure, had *she* been quite guiltless? She enjoyed her new life so much, the converse with riper intellects, the finer atmosphere of thought, the leisure that she took now. She had gone out of the crude girlish circle, yes, let her be honest, their immaturity bored her. But was she to do solely the thing that pleased herself, to arrange and harmonize and enjoy just the æsthetic pleasures, while she was trying to bring all noble thought into unison of character? There was a glimpse of half-sight—"This ought ye to have done, but not to have left the other undone,"—and it *would* somehow translate itself. There was a latent thoroughness in her.

"There, dear," in a softer tone, "don't cry any more. Come to my room this afternoon, there will be an hour before recreation. Bring your worst exercises. And trust Willard. Now, won't you have a little run to start the red blood in motion? You've made it sluggish by fudge



and chocolate and olives and sardines and sitting up late."

She took her hand and they flew along until Shirley was out of breath.

"Oh, I think you do love me a little. This seems quite like old times. I love you, Helen!" and she clasped her about the neck.

"I love you more than a little," was the reply.

Helen had meant to read the "Iphigenie" with Frau Menzel just for pleasure. It was not always that the intellectual German woman could devote an hour through the course of the day. She stopped now and changed the arrangement, then went to her astronomy, which she found most fascinating as she was calculating the revolutions of the planets and making diagrams.

Alas, poor Shirley! The showing was very bad. Something dropped out—verses, and as they were "to Helen," she began to read them while the girl was arranging the leaves of a Latin exercise.

"Oh! I didn't think I had that!" she cried. "Don't read it, Helen!" and she stretched out



her hand for it. "I don't feel so now." The fair face was scarlet and tears swam in her eyes.

"My dear child, you have indulged in what some poet calls 'the luxury of woe.' I wish you couldn't write verses quite so easily. And you are too young to be so despairing because a friend has been busy and could not devote her time to you. It really weakens your mind to brood over sorrows that are largely imaginary. And you can write such lovely little poems. They were asking about one for the *Miscellany*. I have not been false or even forgetful, Shirley; you must learn that no one person has a right to *all* the interest in a friend's life. Even it would be selfish for a husband or a wife to demand it, I think, though lovers I have heard are apt to do so. Now let us go at Latin with what Joe Gargery called 'renewed vigor.' "

Shirley laughed in spite of herself.

It was an hour well spent and Shirley took a new interest in the translations, though she admitted that she made out better with the poems.

"Now we'll have a ramble over to the woods and then you must study in good earnest this



evening. Lock your door to keep the girls out. You must re-establish your standing. We will talk over some of the other things."

There was a wonderful depth to the blue sky and they studied the atmosphere, the circling clouds, the nearly leafless trees, the great book of nature where to-day there was an enchanting serenity that lifted one's soul above depression and made the way light and joyous. Helen did not feel it a waste of time and the responsibility she had rather protested against became one of the duties again. Was she not to sow beside *all* waters? Was not that what Christian Endeavor meant?

She kissed Shirley and sent her on her way much lighter of heart.

It was, "What thy hands find to do." And it was to be done "with thy might," not halfheartedly.



## CHAPTER XI

### A NEW WOMAN

"HELEN, look at your note," cried Lorraine.  
"Though by the seal I think they are all alike."

"Does that imply a dearth of originality?"

Lorraine laughed inerrily. Helen looked at the seal in scarlet wax and then cut across the end.

"Oh, that is just splendid! An invitation to supper and a request to come as early as we can. Why, I am delighted! Shall I sing you an old song?"

" 'I'm always glad whene'er a friend  
Invites me out to tea;  
For 'tis very dull to stay at home  
With no one courting me.' "

"But you could have had, Helen. Girls, don't you think we ought to be planning and promising to be each other's bridesmaids? Helen will be married first. I think Professor Gates is keeping an eye on her. It isn't altogether star-gazing, but he called her out the



other evening to see the occultation of something."

"One passes the other by, my dear girls, and no doubt goes on its way rejoicing," but Helen flushed in spite of her merry tone.

"I've never had an admirer," interposed Lorraine.

"Nor I either," appended Leslie. "It amuses me to hear these girls of sixteen count over their conquests. But—of course we will go."

"Oh, I wouldn't miss it for anything. Sadie March is asked also. No one else, I think. It is just adorable in Mrs. Yarrow. I've wanted to enter the charmed precincts of Tulip Cottage. And I must say I like Professor Yarrow. He is so patient with the slow girls."

They skipped part of recreation hour and wended their way to the cottage. A bright face nodded to them from the window, and the lady opened the door herself.

"Welcome; thrice, nay, four times welcome. I am glad you have come so early. I was afraid you might be scrupulously fashionable unless I expressly stipulated. Lay off your wraps and Leah will take them upstairs."



Leah was a neat, intelligent young girl, a protégée of Mrs. Yarrow's.

"Now come into my sanctum. You see, we cannot be highly fashionable in this nest, but it is very cozy. Mr. Yarrow has the room across the hall. It has a capacious closet in it, and he has sighed for a nice big closet, he declares. Then there's a dining-room and a kitchen, and I did not want to be poked off upstairs, so I gave up having a state drawing-room. We do enjoy the home so much."

If it was not stately it was very attractive. The walls had a pale gray tint with a beautiful frieze in colors. There was one pretty bookcase, a Vernis Marten cabinet, with no end of choice articles; a great cozy lounge, a handsome desk, and small tables of choice books here and there. The pictures were mostly virgins, the nearest divine ones that Art had inspired, while various others adorned the hall, the stairs being set back, so that there was almost a reception-room. It had a really fascinating aspect.

"This is my first girls' company. I have met most of the teachers, professors," laugh-



ingly. "I like sitting round a table and talking; it is said that tea loosens women's tongues. I've heard you three girls called the 'Graces,' and a cousin of Miss March's was in my college, but it would only seem a sort of high school to you. I promised to hunt up Sadie as soon as possible, and we are friends already. And as she was a senior, you know her well. Maybe you'll think you have been inveigled under false pretenses. The professor will not be home until eight this evening, so we shall just have a girls' tea. I'm sort of hungry for girls' gossip, what and whom they like; they get over hating when they enter the juniors."

"It would be ungracious to say we didn't care, but we *do* really like the prospect of a girls' tea," said Leslie, gayly. "And the senior class meets the professor. I see him going through the halls and we speak as we pass by, and I half wish I were a pupil again."

"He wasn't very used to girls when I first met him. You see, he had been teaching boys mostly. He has told me since he liked the



girls, because they keep their hands cleaner and were not so wasteful about chemicals. And now I think he likes them for several new virtues he has discovered."

"I'm very glad of that," returned Lorraine. "I like to hear girls praised."

Mrs. Yarrow nodded and her smile made her seem like a girl among them.

"Of course you taught before you were president——" and Sadie paused, a little startled at her daring.

"Oh, I taught in a country school when I was only seventeen. It was quite nice. There was a man principal for the larger children. He had just come from Yale, and he inspired me on the subject and desire for a college education. An aunt brought me up, and she was quite sure I knew enough if I could teach and be paid for it. We lived very, very simply. And I used to wonder how I could ever compass my dreams. It's growing dusky—the days shorten so. I'll light the gas log. Do you love twilight?"

The girls answered with one accord. She touched a match to it and the flames crept up



everywhere, went dancing and careering over, under, as if they were chasing each other.

"I like it so much. I sit here and sew while husband reads to me. Then we have a game of chess."

"And how did you get to college?" asked Helen, thinking of her own resolve.

"Well, I used to conjure up impossible plans. It was quite easy even then for a man to work his way through, but the higher education of woman did not seem so important, and I was afraid there wouldn't be stockings enough to darn to pay my way. I was taught to sew in the old-fashioned style, hemming with stitches that looked like print, darning over and under until you really made a new piece of cloth. I think it a great waste of time now. There was Mount Holyoke. I used to dream over its splendid founder, who took one of the first steps in woman's emancipation from trifles. I meant to write some day, but Aunt Martha had a bad fall, and it would have seemed cruel to leave her. So I went on teaching the second year, studying too, for I would have a little maid come in and do the chores



and wash dishes. Aunt Martha could sit by the stove and cook, with some one to wait on her. Then no one, not even the doctor, thought of her dying, though he said she would be lame for life. But one day she was taken suddenly ill, the maid said she had fallen while trying to make her bed. It was paralysis, and nine days after she died. I sometimes think what needlessly hard and sad lives those women of the older time had. The merit is in the result reached, and if you can do it in a comparatively easy way, why should you take the long, hard road?"

She smiled at her small audience, whose faces were eager with interest.

"It was found after the funeral that Aunt Martha had left quite a fortune, when every one supposed her comparatively poor. She had no near relatives, my mother being her only sister. Some distant cousins came forward, but I was nearest of kin, and of course her heir. Now, you see that takes the romance out of my story. When I was nominated for president at Hatfield, an interviewer wanted to write me up, and especially the strenuous efforts I had



made for my education," and she laughed pleasantly. "It was all clear sailing after that. I had two years in an excellent seminary, three years in college, then taught and studied, for after all there was so much ahead of me. Hatfield was one of the new western colleges, and after teaching and really raising the standard, I accepted the presidency. I've had a very pleasant time, take it altogether. You know our state is one of the women's states, as we are called rather in derision."

"And we wondered if you were strong-minded? Did you really vote?" asked Lorraine, with eager curiosity.

"Why, yes, since it was my duty."

"But you don't seem a bit—and you married," exclaimed Sadie March, incoherently.

"I'll confess to being strong-minded in various ways. I could not have governed a colony of girls if I had been weak and irresolute. We must have some strength of will and purpose to carry us serenely through the crowding events of life. We cannot be governed by moods and half-beliefs if we mean to accomplish anything. One must have a well-dis-



ciplined mind and a knowledge of the principles of government, and you cannot have it without earnest effort. I think one need not be unwomanly, however. Oh, it must be near tea time. Have I tired you? And I meant to hear about your lives instead."

She rose and lighted the burners. Then she excused herself a moment.

"She's just splendid!" declared Leslie. "I could listen to her all night."

"I want to hear how she came to fall in love," said Lorraine, with an excited sigh. "I'm really glad the professor isn't home just yet." Truly, falling in love was an awesome mystery to her guileless and ingenuous mind. The few engaged girls did not come up to her ideal.

"And she's so sweet, so modern, her gown is so pretty, and her hair is dressed in the prevailing fashion. She has several beautiful rings, and her neck chain and pendant is superb! I noticed it the night of the reception. Girls, I am really in love with her myself," declared Sadie.

"And she wears trains. I like them for the



house and evenings. I can't abide those miserable short skirts of ankle length indoors, while they are just the thing for rainy days. And it gives a woman a more dignified and gracious appearance, makes a sort of dividing line between them and girls."

"It was one of the things I liked so much in Miss Craven," said Leslie. "She has charming taste."

Helen remembered when she was rather stiff and ungraceful, but the love of beauty and harmony had grown as soon as there had been something to nourish it.

Mrs. Yarrow re-entered. She was a little flushed, her eyes were bright and shining, and her smile positively enchanting.

"I have only one maid for steady company, and we met her in an accidental manner, quite homeless and forlorn. I am training her and she is a grateful little thing, but I do delight in 'puttering,' to use a homely country word. Housekeeping is very entertaining."

"But how did you come to know so much about that?" asked Helen.

"Well, I credit Aunt Martha with some of it,



though I have improved upon her methods. I have discarded many non-essentials, and have more time for the real enjoyment. I do not like the average servant of to-day. When you must put up with them—why, you must. Come.”

The table was temptingly arrayed with exquisite china and dainty cut-glass that lent a sparkle even to the white cloth. Plates of white and brown bread, cold meats delicately sliced, creamed oysters, and some fruits clear and tempting. Sliced lemon to those who preferred Russian tea, cream and sugar in dainty sets. It was like a picture, Helen thought, so delicate, yet an abundance.

“Did you teach it in the college?” Helen inquired.

“Some branches, and the physical requirements of the body. But tastes and the income of families are so dissimilar that one cannot insist upon hard and fast methods. We *do* waste too much as a general rule. We are accused of being the most wasteful nation in our food. This, too, while hundreds are half-starved. And we study sociology and discuss



the best ways of mending the world, while we do not mend ourselves. But, girls, I've hardly gotten over being a college president. Pardon me."

"Oh," said Lorraine, "we are to have a discussion as to whether we are best fitted for our duty by the intellectual or the practical life. And I am appointed speaker to open the debate on the intellectual side. After all, the practical includes the most of our lives. It comprehends so many things, such thousands of people."

"Still I think the educated woman can be practical also. I know they are not always," with a smile of half-suppressed fun. "But I should be ashamed to confess the ignorance some women seem to glory in. I do not know how they can go through the ordinary branches and not know more. They never seem to apply any fact to real living. And what is the use of so much learning if you do not know how to use it? We'll have a symposium some time, girls, on this very subject?"

They had come to dessert time, if it was a tea. Leah entered and removed the plates,



brought different kinds of cake, sweets, and candied fruits.

"Now we ought to go to the lighter side—the fun college girls have. Miss Brooks, isn't there some in your experience?"

Leslie considered and recalled two or three incidents that started Helen on some amusing reminiscences, and they were in full swing of mirth and laughter when the hall door closed and a step was heard. They glanced at Mrs. Yarrow in a sort of dismay. She laughed, too, and leaning back in her chair called cordially—"We are all here."

The professor came in and kissed his wife, then shook hands with each girl. He had a bit of color in his cheeks from the crisp air without, and his eyes were bright. He certainly looked off duty, Sadie said afterwards, "like a common man."

"What was the laugh about? It was a cheering welcome as one enters his own house."

The girls colored. "We were talking over college pranks," said Mrs. Yarrow. "We have all had a hand in them."



"They are good to remember at times when they have not been positively vicious. But girls seldom do that in their hazing. And I am glad it is going out of date somewhat with boys, the cruel and unmanly kinds. I don't mind a stand-up free fight, but what can one boy do among a crowd! May I have a cup of tea?" in a persuasive manner.

"You ought to pay your score," Mrs. Yar-row said, with a smile of easy fellowship.

"Confess my misdoings?" raising his brows a trifle. "That would be setting a bad example before these youthful minds. But if I am to purchase the tea——" She held the cup daintily poised in her hand.

"I went to Hatfield to induct young women into an acquaintance with chemicals. They were not very ignorant and quite attentive, I will say. The laboratory was on the third floor in a sort of ell. I had been trying some experiments and correcting some wild statements. I had to go home to my supper, give a lesson to three young fellows, and then lecture in the public hall. I put on my coat, took my hat, and turned the knob of the door, find-



ing to my surprise I was locked in. I tried to turn the key from the inside, but my education as a burglar had been neglected, and I could not find the right sort of tool. I went to the window—a group of girls were disporting themselves on the green. I did not dare let myself down with towels tied together, and then a thought struck me. I would sit at the door and when I heard a little movement of the key pounce out on the culprit. I lighted the gas, took my seat and a book, but I was intent upon listening, and trying to guess who had sprung the plot on me. Minute after minute passed and I began to think what I should do so as not to give the merry crew a chance to laugh. Not a step, not a movement. Now what would you have done?"

"I should have tried the door again," laughed Helen, her face alight with amusement.

"Exactly. I have heard that great Homer nods. I listened until I could hear my own breathing, then I began to get impatient. Suddenly I rose and rang the bell sharply. I heard the maid's step come pattering along. I must



have been out of temper, I will admit. I'm not sure but I thundered. 'Unlock that door!' I commanded. The maid turned the knob.

" 'Why, it isn't locked,' she said in surprise.

"So I had given myself away. After that I always took out the key. Now, have I earned my cup of tea?"

They all laughed. They had been caught in the same trap.

"I am very glad to see you, young ladies. I hope you will be sociable enough with Mrs. Yarrow to keep her from regretting the step she has taken."

"We might form an outside class if there is any danger of that," said Leslie. "There are a good many branches yet to explore."

"I hope they will be modern ones. We are living in to-day and we don't want to be encumbered with too much of the past that has no immediate bearing on what we must do. Girls ought to select a specialty that is likely to be of use. Miss Grant, what do you mean to do with this little span, or doesn't it make any difference what you do? Or has some one marked out life for you?"



"No, I am quite independent in one way. I really have no one to order me. But I expect to teach. I graduated last year and this is the 'little more' course."

"You are going to be an argument for heredity, I suppose? When I was in London I heard your father was held in high repute as a fine Oriental scholar."

"Oh, if you want our Orientalist you must see Miss Coultas. I think she will never be satisfied until they have found out what language was spoken before the confusion of tongues," said Leslie, with a touch of gayety.

"The only Oriental tastes I have are for beautiful rich colors and fine laces and jewelry. I don't care to go back to the beginning of things. Anno Domini is enough for me. I shall never learn a quarter of what has transpired since the Christian Era. Father really cared nothing about modern lore or modern life," exclaimed Helen.

"That is apt to be the case with such scholars. We cannot take in everything, the brain wouldn't digest it all. Even with our latter-day knowledge of concentration we find we



must choose. Drop this if we want to take up that. I must confess I am a good deal of a modern myself, even to being interested in radium. But you are doing some excellent work in chemistry."

"Oh, thank you," and Helen gave a piquant nod.

They went back to the fire presently, and the professor led them to talk somewhat of their personal hopes and desires. They found themselves talking very frankly, as Helen said afterward, not minding the professor or having any sense of newness about him. Mrs. Yarrow made the atmosphere so charming. They confessed the poets they loved, the novels they admired, quoted from characters grave and gay, and were surprised when ten o'clock came.

The professor escorted them home. "I've had a delightful evening," he said. "I hope you will come often."

"Isn't she just a darling!" exclaimed the enthusiastic Sadie. "Oh, what would Miss Ferris think of her! And that she has really voted, gone to the polls that men seem to think



would be so dreadful for women. She's so domestic, too, at least what *I* call domestic. I hate the flutter and fuss of some women. Everything was so delicate and dainty!"

"There ought to be a new 'chair' in college. Not exactly domestic science, but the fine art of doing things beautifully and making you feel as if you had always known your hostess. And I did so like some of those sweet little poems she read," and Leslie's face was all aglow with pleasure.

"Oh dear! It is a delight after all to live in a fine intellectual world," returned Helen. "Some of it seems stilted, but that is the person I do believe."

"Good-night!" cried Lorraine. "I'm sleepy. And I haven't even looked at my astronomy. I don't know whether the stars are shining or not."

"You were not in chapel last evening," said Shirley, the next day.

"No, I went out to tea. Did you study?"

"Some. Then two of the girls came in. They're going to have a play."

"Did they ask you to take a part?"



"Yes, they want me to. It's a sort of farce——"

"I do not think you can, Shirley dear," and Helen tried by her voice to soften what she knew would be a disappointment. "Then you certainly ought not waste your time upon it."

"Oh, why?" in a petulant tone.

"Your class standing will not admit of it, I am afraid. You see we do not come for pure pleasure."

"I've half a mind to throw the whole thing up!" in a captious manner.

"And go home?"

"Well—I wouldn't have to do that. They wouldn't drop me before the close of the year."

"And what would Willard say?"

"He doesn't trouble much about me. He has not written in ever so long. Maybe he is tired of me," despondingly.

"Oh, he isn't; something has happened. He has been very busy."

"You see, we are not really engaged. He might begin to like some one better. Do you know that Ruth Woodley? Well, her lover has broken a real solid engagement, and Ruth's



mother insists she shall send back her diamond. Ruth is broken-hearted."

"Let me see—there's a glee club practice to-night. Suppose we take recreation hour and go over some of the things that bother you so. Oh, little dear, I do want you to retrieve your standing."

"Everything seems to go wrong," impatiently.

"No, only the little girl has gone wrong. Little Pilgrim has strayed out of the right path, but we will find it again and set her feet in it. Be sure, now—recreation hour."

"You have so many lovely things in your life," half enviously.

When the mail came up at noon there was a short note from Willard. He had been very much rushed, with hardly time to write to Shirley even, but he knew Helen would comfort her and see that she was happy, and much more lover-like solicitude.

Helen gave a sigh. No, she really had no doubt of Willard's constancy, and yet the thought would cross her mind.

Shirley ran to meet her when the throng of



girls poured out of the halls. Her face was radiant.

"Two letters—one has been going round no one knows where, marked 'missent.' That was the reason," in a glad, triumphant tone. "And he loves me just the same. Oh, I'm so happy!"

"Happy enough to study?" in sweet inquiry.

"Oh, I was awful in physics this afternoon. Everything went out of my head. Yes, I was so happy," and her face was radiant with exquisite delight. "He asked me to send him some verses. Oh, I couldn't help it, they just wrote themselves."

What was she to do with this impressionable, wistful creature so eager for joy, and now at the very summit of delight?

"You must never doubt Willard again. But you *must* study to please him, to make yourself more companionable to his family. Mrs. Bell will love you dearly. You see, she has always taken such an interest in girls' lives, and she would like some one who would slip into Daisy's place, some one well-bred and intelligent, which many of the girls here are not,



when they first come. I think you have not been so choice in your companions."

Shirley hung her head. If she had told the truth she would have said she did not quite approve of them herself, but they seemed to like her so much.

"And I couldn't have you," she murmured, with a soft upbraiding in her voice.

"No. I have a great many other matters on my mind. Will you bring all the condemned exercises to my room? I will go over them by odd spells."

"Oh, how good you are! But there are so many."

"No matter. Let us get down to the worst, then there is hope. You did very well last year, you know. You can again."

She kissed the hand she had been holding so tightly. The wind was blowing up a little chilly.

"Now let us walk briskly around the circle to stir our blood. Study all the evening."

"Oh, could I stay in your room? You see, some of the girls will be in—and they want to talk——"

"Yes. That will be an excellent plan.



Good-by, little girl. You see I trust you as well as Willard."

She could not dismiss the youthful couple from her mind as she was smoothing her ruffled hair and changing her dress. They did seem very young. Was she growing old and critical too fast?

No, she had never felt younger. All the vital forces were alive within her and the mysterious future was a sort of golden promised land. And she seemed able to understand why she had not loved Willard and how he had made his mistake. They were good comrades on certain lines, the complement of each other. He had much natural refinement, he could not have escaped it being reared in such a family. She had something of a boy's strength with a girl's innate sense of propriety. As she had said of herself, she was not sentimental. But she did not want to grow hard and cold, as some of the teachers were, not all, and Mrs. Yarrow, with her years of labor, was a very girl at heart.

She could see where Shirley would suit Willard admirably. He was making strides in a man's development. He liked to be deferred



to, to be adored, to have some one clinging, ready to be caressed, longing for his return, hungering for his love and accepting it as the choicest blessing of life. All this Shirley would do, but she would never try to absorb the man in jealous transports. If there came a moment of forgetfulness she would stand aside grieved to the heart's core and raise wondering, entreating eyes that would overflow with delight when the sun shone again. They would grow into each other without any trying. She would have given up the best of her ideal life and have been always trying, never quite attaining.

How did she come to know so much of the demands of love? Was there a seed planted in every woman's soul?

The girls came in for her and she turned laughingly.

"I may be poor," she exclaimed, with an impressive wave of the hand, "and I may stay a maid to the end of the chapter. But I don't mean ever to grow old. I shall find the fountain of eternal youth and bathe in it continually."



## CHAPTER XII

### A SPRIG OF HEARTSEASE

HALLOWE'EN had been a merry time with masks and surprises, and now Christmas was drawing nigh. Nightly revels in rooms stopped suddenly. Sophomore girls were scored by some of the professors. If the conditions were not mostly made up in the next two weeks there would be trouble. There was studying in hot haste.

Shirley was very happy and had applied herself diligently, for Willard had planned a lovely surprise. He had been in Washington, where Mr. Loring was conducting an important case, and he should find time to go out to Evanston and interview Mr. and Mrs. Chardavoyne. Then he had persuaded his mother to come to New York and matronize Shirley, and they would have a splendid week or ten days and have everything settled.

The freshmen had done very well. True,



there had been some troubles and heart-burnings and two girls had been summarily dismissed, but the cause was only guessed at.

Miss Powers came from her examinations triumphant.

"I've just had a perfect record," she said to Helen. "They had made a very friendly acquaintance. I'm going to try for that prize. Mother would be proud of the money, but dear old daddy would think of the glory alone. And I shall not even breathe that there is any such prize."

"And I wish you all success," returned Helen, heartily.

"Here is a plan," exclaimed Leslie Brooks. "Helen, just feel rich enough to join, or it may—well, it will not be half as nice. Lorraine goes home, you know. Miss Morse proposes that we three shall go to New York together. She knows of a nice place where we can board for a moderate price. There are so many splendid things about Christmas time. I've been earning money," laughing, "and I want to treat myself to something unusual, splendid. Can't you—won't you join? You



know how lovely Miss Morse was to us last year."

"And I've been earning a little money—of course, some of the juniors have paid me for tutoring. But Professor Yates asked me to make the diagrams of the planets—he does it for some scientific papers, and I did most of the November work and then nearly all for December. And this very morning he insisted on paying me, though really I liked the work and it absolutely fascinated me and was splendid training. I enjoyed the calculating. I often think now of what some one said in a book—'God works at an infinite diagram!' Astronomy makes the world seem still more marvellous to you."

"Oh, you lucky girl! I liked the names and the motions and the legends of the stars, but astronomy always confused me and made my head whirl. Well—will you go?"

"Oh, I shall be just delighted. And on our return we might squeeze out two days for Grey Court."

"That would be just as well."

Miss Morse was very much gratified. They



would make arrangements to go on Saturday, as Christmas fell on Monday. There would be such beautiful services in the churches. Shirley could go with them. Willard telegraphed that he should like the arrangements very much, as he should be so busy and wanted to settle his mother comfortably.

So the party perfected their plans and started off, leaving some envious hearts behind, some sad ones. Helen laid a little gift on Miss Carr's table as she came away, and her heart rose in thanksgiving that she had never been lonely on holidays. How many of the good things of life had come to her! One little sentence kept running through her mind—"Freely ye have received, freely give." Had she anything to give but herself? Must she not try diligently to give of that gladly?

The house was quite uptown in an old-fashioned street that had not yet been turned into apartments. Mrs. Waite received them cordially, and said to Miss Morse that the party was truly a god-send, as the family who had been with her three months had suddenly gone to Florida. The rooms were clean and cheer-



ful, both fronting on the street. Miss Morse would take the smaller one, and they began to settle their luggage.

Shirley had been in a state of dreamy happiness since Willard had telegraphed that all was right and he would come for her at two. They had a quiet lunch. Then Helen said: "You stay down in the parlor—you will want your first talk alone."

"O dear!" she exclaimed laughingly as the three paused at the windows and looked down into the street. "I wonder who will be the next love-lorn girl to come to hand? Why, I ought to be a dowager, planning how to get rid of my daughters! Well, I suppose they are happy,—all girls with lovers, I mean. Now oughtn't we make some real plans? Shall we go out and see Christmas? Or will everything be jammed to suffocation?"

"Monday night is the Messiah. That is brother's Christmas for all of us. Tuesday afternoon, a *matinée*, "The Huguenots"—that is my treat, and Sidney comes in the evening. After that——"

"Not exactly the deluge," returned Leslie.



"We must have time to see the stores, the great library, and the museum. You know, I am quite a stranger to the extravagant joys of life; poor but honest so far."

"Oh, that's Willard!" began Helen. "I'm curious to hear about the Chardavoynes."

But the lovers talked a long while. Then Shirley ran upstairs, her face radiant with delight. She certainly was very pretty. She held up her finger with its diamond circlet.

"Oh, we all congratulate you!" and Helen kissed her fondly. The others did the same.

"Mamma wrote me a lovely letter. She likes Willard very much, and papa says it is all right, only we must not think of marrying until I have finished my year. As if we wanted to!" with a soft, joyous little laugh. "And, Helen, Mrs. Bell wishes you to come down with me; she wants to see you so very much. She is real well. And will you all come to the parlor, and—why, I think *he* is to be congratulated, too. It makes him so happy."

They went down. Willard kissed Helen as if she had been a sister, and they had a really joyous time. He seemed to have grown taller



—he was so proud and manly, and—yes, perfectly content. Helen had a sort of queer feeling for a moment. Not that there was any jealousy in it—it was, perhaps, the surprise that love could be so completely transferred. No, it was the misreading, taking a satisfying companionship and trying to make it wear love's divine raiment.

Shirley and Willard talked at once, one prompting the other, laughing in delicious transport, until he said they must return or his mother would have no visit at all with Helen.

"I cannot express my delight at having you here at this time," he declared. "And my mother will be so glad to see you all again. She enjoyed you so much at Miss Craven's."

"Oh, let us walk!" cried Shirley. "I detest those clattering cars, where you can't hear a word any one says. And wasn't it delightful that father and mother should take to Willard at once? Though I don't know how they could have helped it."

"I hope you will always keep your good opin-



ion of me," he laughed with a joyous sound, "and that I may deserve it," in a graver tone.

The air was fresh and crisp, the streets were thronged by late shoppers and sightseers. Shirley was so gay and sweet in her perfect happiness that Helen was more than content.

Mrs. Bell gave her a motherly sweet welcome, and they talked real news. How the Towne children were growing and what wisely funny observations they made, how sweet Marjorie's little girl was, and how they hated to give up grandmother for the Christmas feast.

"But, you know, I had to come for Willard's sake, when he had been away so long. And—oh, it seems as if I must be a real mother to Shirley. I suppose mothers are not all alike," with a tender smile that forgave shortcomings. "But my children have always been so much to me, and the girls' husbands are like real sons. Some things about Shirley suggest Daisy, only Shirley is so sweetly, so completely satisfied, and Willard is deeply in love. Still he will not weaken in his ambitious plans. He has a fine future before him, and much as Shirley loves, she will never be petty and exacting.



She was so charming with the children at Grey Court. I'm not sure but being a grandmother is one of the most satisfying of joys; the real delight in going down the other side of the hill. If only Mr. Bell could have been spared."

They would have her take a cup of tea with them. Then she insisted she must go back, but would come again to-morrow. Shirley kissed her with extravagant tenderness.

When they were out in the street Willard said:

"Like Shirley, I want to walk so that I may talk. There is so much to say. Are you not curious about the Chardavoynes?"

"Indeed, I am," with much warmth.

"They've always seemed rather odd to me. Our folks were so careful about Daisy, you know. While we were at Washington I wrote to Mr. Chardavoyne, asking permission to call on him and stating my desire, and giving him references, and he said he would be very pleased to see me. Helen, they are like an old-fashioned story: not so much quaint as with that unworldly aspect you never find among us



Northerners. The house is old and rambling, some of it really uninhabitable, I think, but they have the air of living in a palace. A big estate, largely woodland, altogether out of the cotton belt, and lots of negro hangers-on. The married daughter is rather more modern. Mr. Chardavoyne has an elegant library, with many old and valuable books. They have two rooms, in which are crowded all they own of beautiful things, and they are wonderful. They read poetry, they confer and discuss, and he has been translating some old Latin poems that an ancestor had in sixteen hundred. A Philadelphia firm has contracted for them. They talk to each other in foreign tongues. She plays on a harp, and they have a piano and flute. Oh, I don't wonder that Shirley is poetical and musical, and all that, since it is their very life. And he took my proposal in the coolest and most agreeable manner, but he was practical enough to say he had written to my references. I couldn't have forgiven him if he had been willing to hand Shirley over to anybody for the mere asking. Of course they supposed Shirley would marry some time; it



was much better for girls to marry; but he had made arrangements for her to remain at college until next summer. They were not rich, so Shirley would not have any fortune. All he asked was that a man should take good care of her, for he did not think she was the kind of girl to look out for herself, as Northern girls were accustomed to. They seem to love her very much, too, but they are so full of these old poems, so steeped in the intellectual side of life, never thinking of advantages or success, but just the pure pleasure to themselves, though they plan when Shirley is married that they will go to England and hunt up some family matters. Altogether it was the queerest interview. You couldn't help liking them, they are so charming, and really cultivated. But the affair is all settled and we are going to be happy, only I wish it was next July," with an eager intonation.

"I am very glad for you, Willard. And time will go fast enough. One can see where Shirley gets some of her fascinating characteristics."

"She is very charming. Afterward I mean



to have mother. I think she sort of anticipates it. And Shirley is so eager to be loved. Oh, Helen, through you my life will be made—shall I say one grand sweet song, just a dream of enchanting love and bliss? And you have been so good to her. Have I bored you with my selfish rhapsody?”

“If love couldn’t make one enthusiastic he would be hard of heart—not worth any girl’s acceptance,” she declared in a sweet tone.

He wanted to wish her the same happiness, but delicacy withheld him. When she gave her heart it would be a superior gift, and it seemed as if no ordinary man was worthy of it. Yet for such a woman to remain single was a travesty of what was best and finest in womanhood.

They said a cordial good-night to each other. Leslie was eager to hear the conclusion of the matter.

“I think it extremely fortunate that Shirley has fallen into such good hands. She is very sweet and pure of heart, but she would lack the strength needed to buffet with adversity. She is tractable, and has a strong sense of right and



truth. I have missed your influence on her, Helen, yet one must have a little care for one's self. Oh, dear girl, do not take any blame on yourself. I think you are really too ready to accept the cares of others. We are only required to 'love our neighbor as ourselves,' not so much better that we wrong ourselves," and Miss Morse held her to her heart and kissed her.

Sunday was fine, and they went to some glorious services. Monday they took lunch with Mrs. Bell, and then Shirley and Willard insisted they should go up to the Park and have a fine drive about. Shirley seemed to have grown more womanly, as if the definite conclusion was rapidly strengthening her, and unfolding a new growth that had in it more of soul.

Then they were rapt with the glorious and majestic strains of "The Messiah," appealing to what was highest in all their natures.

"If I were very rich," said Helen, "I should want to hear all the finest singers and all the magnificent music in the world."

Mr. Morse was a welcome addition to their



party, but it seemed to Helen that she had hardly time to breathe, and that she was almost torn in two. She could have declined the attentions of the lovers, but there was Mrs. Bell, who had never been more motherly and delightful, and so interested in Helen's welfare.

"I feel as if I were wronging you, Helen," declared Leslie. "We have such grand talks and rambles about picture galleries and book-stores. What splendid things there are in a great city! I think Mr. Morse has a good deal of courage and love for real Christian work to spend his time in a poor unintellectual country town, when he is capable of appreciating the best and finest. And you are wasting the hours of your precious visit over those spooning lovers."

"I spent the afternoon with Mrs. Bell alone. And think—Shirley had not seen Willard, but just once for a few hours, since last summer! Her good times seem to make her lovelier and more grateful. She will be such a sweet daughter to Mrs. Bell. I wish they could be married at once."



"Oh, so do I. You would be relieved of a good deal. She will pester you to death when we are back in college."

"I wasn't thinking of that," and Helen flushed.

Mr. Morse was to leave them on Saturday. They would stay over until Tuesday morning. He was very loth to go.

"If I had thought to get some one to take my place and service—but it is too late now," he said, regretfully.

They went to a grand midnight mass that was magnificent, and packed their belongings, late as it was, for an early journey the next morning.

It gave Helen a twinge of sadness to think this would be her last return, except as an alumni visitor. What memories thronged to her brain as she passed the halls—girlhood's fears and ambitions, the aims and hopes of coming womanhood, the last stile passed, the wide open field of the future beyond.

Shirley did not return until the next week. She wore her engagement ring as if it was quite an ordinary thing. And Helen was ex-



tremely glad to find her reticent about the matter and ready to take up her studies in earnest.

"I don't really expect to pass out of the sophomores," she said, "but I am going to stand as high as I can. And Willard said I must not bother you to death, but send some of the puzzles to him. You have been so good to me, you dear, sweet girl."

She was glad to have Shirley begin to depend somewhat upon herself. She was putting her latent energies, that Willard had awakened, into the work. Her mind was at rest and she was happy. Not that she had really doubted before; it was more the youthful longing for sympathy, and now in her certainty she did not need it.

But pleasures ran gayly along with studies. There was snow, and merry crowds went out on Saturday, giving thanks that the snow had been so considerate. Bright eyes and rosy cheeks came in from snow-balling contests. There was more than one merry, girlish combat.

"Really, did you know that Miss Carr has a new suit?" asked Elsie Dixon, one morning.



"I don't see how she could spend time enough to buy it. She hasn't been to any kind of pleasure gathering, she wouldn't join anything, and told me when she wanted to read Shakespeare she preferred to do it in the solitude of her room. And her suit is green, think of it! But it has a sort of modern look and the coat fits pretty well——"

"Do let her alone, Elsie. She never misses a recitation. But Miss Grannis said she was the hardest to get along with; that she really hoarded her ideas, and you had to drag them out of her when there is any summing up, though she writes good papers. But that green suit—and her hat is the same straw she wore when she first came here, mostly covered with dingy black velvet. I fancy she did it herself."

"I know of a girl who was here two years ago who dressed in the most elegant manner and exquisite taste—can I pile up any more fine and appropriate adjectives? She looked as if she had just stepped out of a frame—a perfect picture. She spent the money her father sent her to pay her bills, she borrowed money



of everybody, and decamped, marrying a millionaire."

"That was Carol Saybrook. And she has never had the honesty to pay back."

"So you can't always tell a person's principles by the clothes they wear. Remember that, Elsie Dixon."

"But you can their taste."

"I'm not so sure of that either. I've read of heroines who were lovely in simple white frocks, but there was no mention of laundry bills. And beautiful fine laces, but you can't buy them for twenty-five cents a yard. And sometimes when you are poor you have a donation of clothes from your great-aunt that you would never think of buying."

"Oh, girls, let's turn our attention to the difference between Balzac and George Sand. I think most French writers are immoral, but one must know a little of everything. And when it is in the college curriculum——"

"I've read some really beautiful French stories. Many of their mothers in fiction are lovely."

"I hate these discussions."



"And I just love them. After you have talked a book over you come to have some real ideas about it. It improves your critical powers."

"Miss Carr's ideas of Browning! And she didn't know who wrote 'Aurora Leigh.' I doubt if she could tell who wrote Longfellow!"

There was a general laugh at that.

Helen had not thought much about Miss Carr since her several rebuffs. But in the treacherous lights of the dining table she saw that she was very pale and seemed thinner. She had made no friends, not even among the teachers. She would speak again.

"Miss Carr," she began, in a quietly attractive tone, "there is to be a lecture to-night on the 'Art of Teaching,' by a Columbian professor. Wouldn't you like to hear it?"

She glanced up with a sort of hungry eagerness, then her countenance fell to its usual indifference.

"I am too busy," she said, briefly.

"And I am at work on an important paper, but I felt I could not miss this. I expect to teach next year."



She made no reply, but passed on. Helen really pitied her. To be a success in life one must possess some attraction.

Then she noticed that Miss Carr ate next to nothing. No wonder she grew thin.

Passing her room one evening she heard a sound like a groan. The door was open an inch or two. Miss Carr had her hands on the table and her face buried in them. Helen knocked lightly, but there was no answer. Then she pushed the door wide open.

"Oh, Miss Carr, are you ill?" in gentle solicitude.

The girl looked up with a frightened expression. Her face was haggard. Then Helen recalled the fact that she had not been at the dining table.

"Is it—headache? You look really ill."

"Do I?" in an alarmed tone. "I cannot, must not be ill."

"We cannot always help it. Can I not get something, do something?"

"Were you ever ill? Oh, you do not look so. But you may not have had to work hard."

"I have never had a fit of illness—a head-



ache, or even a little disarrangement. But I think I can sympathize with people who suffer."

"I am tired, that is all." The weariness of the tone touched Helen deeply. Yet it was almost as if she dismissed her rather curtly.

"Shall I call one of the nurses? She might suggest some remedy."

"Which would be the infirmary, and if you get there they keep you ill in bed. I haven't any time for such coddling. If I could only sleep——"

"You might have a glass of hot water. That sometimes tranquilizes."

"I've had hot water and cold water," impatiently. "I did once have some powders, that was before I came here, but I've lost the prescription. And it is considered bad to depend upon anything. I want to keep my mind clear."

That was good judgment at least. Helen recalled the fact that a girl had been sent home the year before, who was addicted to the morphine habit.

"Then you have been sleepless before?"



"Well, occasionally," with some reluctance.  
"But now for three nights——"

She stopped suddenly, as if she had not meant to admit so much.

"You had better let me summon the doctor."

"No! no! no! I wouldn't mind if you were the doctor. There is something in your voice. I've noticed it before. Will you study medicine?"

"Oh, no. I shall teach."

"Then you are not—oh, I can hardly think what I wanted to say—above work? So many of the girls are. I don't know as it was wise to come here, but I'm not mingling among the pupils. The name carries weight—it stands so high, and that was what I wanted. Oh, for an hour's sleep! Don't people go crazy sometimes?"

Her eyes were wild, her face drawn.

Helen thought she must summon assistance. Then an idea flashed into her mind.

"Were you ever read to sleep?"

"I never knew any one good enough to do that, so I cannot tell."



"And—do you like poetry?"

She expected a protest. "Poetry!" Miss Carr repeated, in a longing, almost passionate tone. "But I have no time for it. Maybe when I get old and have money enough to retire I can indulge in leisure and poetry, and not dip into it by stealth."

"Listen," began Helen, persuasively. "Undress and go to bed, and let me come and read to you. At all events it may tranquilize your nerves."

She was not certain Miss Carr would consent, but she went quickly so there should be no argument. Making a brief explanation to Leslie she returned with her volume in her hand. That Miss Carr should care for poetry amazed her. She brought her bottle of violet water, and wetting a napkin folded it and laid it on her hot forehead, as she was in bed. How wan and gray she looked, her eyes sunken and hollows at the temples. A heartfelt pity warmed Helen towards her.

"Now keep your eyes closed as much as you can, but do not make any special effort."

"You are very kind," said a tremulous voice.



Helen glanced over now and then. Sometimes the eyes were staring, then she would find them closed for a brief while. "In Memoriam" was one of her favorites—she used to read it to Mrs. Wilmarth. Miss Carr's breathing grew less spasmodic, the sighs were not so frequent. She heard the step of the corridor attendant who paused, then tapped at the door.

"It is nearly midnight and I heard voices——"

Helen stepped out and explained, adding—"I think Miss Carr is asleep now."

They both glanced at the quiet figure on the bed that looked truly as if life had fled from it.

"Why didn't you summon the doctor?" she asked, rather sharply.

"She would not hear of it. She is so exhausted that I think she will sleep now. If you will listen occasionally——"

"Yes, you ought to be in bed."

Helen soon fell asleep and when she opened her eyes the bell was ringing, and Leslie dressed for breakfast.

"I was just going to give you a shake. You



were sleeping the sleep of the just," she said, laughingly.

"Or the seven at Ephesus."

"How did you make out?"

"She went to sleep. Leslie, I'm awfully sorry for her. She has been severely let alone, though it is not altogether the fault of the girls. But they have made fun of her and been really unfriendly. Think of her caring for poetry and denying herself the pleasure of reading it! There must be something sad and disappointing in her life."

"Come, you will be late."

Afterward Dr. Lovering waylaid her in the hall.

"What is this about Miss Carr? I do not know the student. Has she been ill?"

"No—studying too hard, I think, and not sleeping any. She is the tall, thin—not very young woman in the postgraduate course," and Helen briefly explained the situation of the night before.

"I should have been summoned," insistently.

"I was afraid of exciting her still more. But she fell asleep," in an apologetic tone.



They entered the room. She had not stirred since Helen left her.

"It is the sleep of thorough exhaustion. Her pulse is too slow for any human being. But—well, she had better not be disturbed. I will look in again presently. You were a very good nurse."

Helen smiled her thanks for the commendation.

It was noon before she had an opportunity to visit her patient. Miss Carr was awake. She had been given some nourishment.

"I can't think what I did last night unless I was silly enough to faint away. I did once. Who found me?"

Helen told the incident briefly, making rather light of it, lest she should protest.

"Oh, that was the half-dream where I heard the sound of wonderful melodies. It was so sweet and strange. Why, I feel all well again, only my head whirls round when I lift it up. And I'm *not* going in the infirmary. I shall summon sufficient Christian Science to say I am not ill and I won't be coddled. It is all well enough for you pretty girls with your ruf-



fles and laces. I shall get up to-morrow and go to studying. There's that 'Theory of Transits' to be written up. Is astronomy any good? You must learn so many useless things to take a degree. Oh, how tired I am!"

"Go to sleep again, that is what you need most," and Helen nodded smilingly.



## CHAPTER XIII

### THE LAW OF LOVE

MISS CARR was three days in bed, dozing some, resting a good deal, and in spite of good counsel doing some studying. The seniors were getting interested in her. In the four years' course they learned nearly every girl's history who remained to complete it. A few called on her, flowers were sent to her, but she remained very uncommunicative, though she really tried to be grateful.

Dr. Lovering insisted that she should have a month's rest, that her nerves were worn threadbare, that her brain could not stand the hard usage she had been giving it.

"I can't do it," she said to Helen. "It's very fine for doctors to recommend this or that—a trip to Bermuda, when you have no money to go with. I shouldn't know how to enjoy leisure. It would be very irksome. And—the young ladies will think me very ungrateful,



but I can't be social with them. I don't want to be. To get interested in people, girls, women, and then go separate ways and never see them again—I couldn't endure that! I'd rather keep by my lonely self."

"Yet the poet said:

" 'Tis better to have loved and lost,  
Than never to have loved at all.' "

"That isn't my creed. I do not want to suffer. See here, I'll quote Victor Hugo: 'When you know and when you love you shall suffer still. The day dawns in tears.' "

"Oh, it sometimes dawns gloriously! But you wouldn't want to make life so bald and bare," Helen said with solemn solicitude.

"If it can't be otherwise, accept it," rather gloomily.

"No," with a beguiling smile. "Try to make it otherwise."

"Oh, Miss Grant, you don't know——" and she stopped suddenly, glancing at the fine rounded figure instinct with elasticity and grace, the red smiling lips, the eyes that held a fascinating light, the complexion radiant with



health, hope, and happiness. She was never like that.

"No, we do not know the trouble and sorrow of other lives until we have been heart to heart," in a tone of indescribable sweetness.

Miss Carr took her place at the recitations with the same air of indifference and the stoical independence that shut out any attempt at friendliness, but she did come in Helen's room one evening, and they were in a tide of animated talk when Leslie entered. In spite of Helen's efforts the conversation languished.

"She does know a great many excellent themes, she has done some good reading, she talks better than many of the girls when she lets herself go. I can't tell just what it is. It occasionally seems a kind of morbid humility, and yet she has a bitter, fiery pride. I should like to know what has set her astray. I'm not going to let her slip out of my hands," declared Helen.

"You keep them pretty full," laughed Leslie.

She was not forgetting Shirley. She asked if some of the studies the girl did not like, and spent the time uselessly over, might not be



dropped and others taken up. History, literature, and art interested her deeply, and one day when the subject was the "Painters of Spain," she made a really exhaustive recitation that quite astonished Miss Ferris.

"You see," Miss Grant said to Professor Bowles, whose strong point was zoölogy and physiology, "she will not finish the college course. She will be married next summer and the accomplishments will be more to her, though her lover is a graduate of Columbia and the law school. A fine, intelligent young man, and the family are quite superior people. The branches she is interested in appeal to her strongly; the others she will only blunder through."

The professor nodded as if he would bear it in mind.

One evening Shirley came in with a blushing face and deprecating air.

"I never can do anything for you, Helen, but you asked about some poems. I've been going over these, making them more sensible and not quite so exuberant. If there is anything the *Miscellany* would like, you are welcome to



them. May I look at your new photographs that Miss Craven sent?"

Helen gave her the portfolio.

"Shirley, some of these are really fine. I wish you were a senior and could be the class poet. You won't mind if I show them to Mrs. Yarrow?"

"No. But I'm dreadfully afraid of the professor."

"He doesn't know what a little songbird you are."

She was very happy in these days and really took pains to improve. Willard was to visit her once a month and spend two days at Easter, going to the chapel service with them.

One of Helen's delights was the evenings spent with Mrs. Yarrow, who had taken in several more girls, and they had a most entertaining reading circle. Now and then they brought fine quotations from some of the novels they had been reading, and guessed at the author. Mrs. Yarrow begged her to bring Shirley.

"I will do that just for you some time. She doesn't shine unless it is in a merry crowd,



with dancing and gayety. I do believe we all have our limitations. And now tell me about your new protégée. Husband just wants to make her over. He thinks she has a remarkable mind."

"I don't get along very rapidly, I must confess," with a half-smile. "Girls have been ready to make me their shrine of confession and tell me their histories, but maybe it is that Miss Carr is older, and wiser," and a merry touch of disappointment played about her face.

But she did not give up the lonely student. Miss Carr excused herself from visiting Helen's room in the evening when she was likely to meet any of the girls.

"Yet you know you are most welcome to *my* den, if you can stand the plainness of it. I have no money to spend on adornments. I must restrain any wild fancies that come to me with a severe hand. I am a barbarian, dwelling on the wild northernmost part of Greece, never touched by the beautiful glow of the Ægean Sea."

She did take a great interest in Helen, and



thought the episode with her father wonderfully interesting.

"You have had some fine assistance in your life," in a tone that would have been envious if it had not been so utterly devoid of passion.

"When I look back at it I think it has been a lovely life. And so I ought to give to others, having received."

"And once in fifty times you may find the one grateful soul."

"Well, even the one would be a precious reward."

"Oh, you are young yet. And you have a great many charms. Before that night I used to watch you and half wish—was I dreadful then?" in a beseeching tone.

"Any other girl would have considered it a pretty severe illness. Doctor Lovering wondered how you came through it so well."

"I'm pretty strong. And it wouldn't have done for me to give up. I know I am plain and uninteresting, morose, unlovable."

"But you needn't be. And you look ever so much better since you have taken brisk walks without your book. Your astronomy



work is fine. I shall have to look to my laurels. And if you would take more pains with—yourself——”

There was a slight frown lingering on the brow.

“I must save money—for old age.”

“But you are a long distance from old age. And you will make an excellent teacher if you don’t fling your knowledge at the pupils. Oh, Miss Carr, if you were to soften a little——”

There! She had said it, and she felt frightened.

The thin lip quivered. “Fate has been hard on me all the way through. Do you care to hear? It isn’t brightened by any charming romances like your life. My mother was a plain country girl, sewed for people, made children’s clothes; turned and dyed and pressed and made over carpets—anything. When she was twenty-eight, just a year older than I am now, she married a man of forty-eight, a sort of shiftless, do-nothing fellow who had hung on one wife until she was worn out, I guess. What possessed mother, unless it was the fear of being an old maid, I can’t divine. Country



girls years ago thought it a disgrace. Well, we lived along in a hand-to-hand fashion. Where I took my desire of learning from is a mystery to me. I read everything, studied whatever I could get hold of, and was monitor in the school; then went in a shoe factory to deal out stock and keep accounts, and when mother was gone kept house in a fashion, studying all the time, and at last taught a country school. Father hung on me just as he had on mother. Then I did have one stroke of luck. His brother came from the West and took him back with him. I kept myself, saved up a little money, went to a summer school, taught and went again, entered a second-rate college and taught classes there, reading, studying, watching people and finding the value of learning, determined to get where I could earn and save. I was bound to have something for old age, and higher salaries helped. I entered the junior class of another college and worked my way up to a diploma. But I found the higher the rank of the college the more dignity it conferred on you, and oh, best of all, the larger salary. So I came here for a postgraduate



course, and mean to take a degree. Then I shall go to the highest bidder. If I can work and save for twenty-five years I will retire. And I will not have to go to an old ladies' home, nor be a pensioner on one's bounty. There, it is a hard, pitiful story, isn't it? I have not made friends—I've changed about so much. And I am desperately plain—I haven't any of the graciousness that wins people. I think I am deficient in—taste, perhaps—I do not know just what to call it. I would like to dress handsomely, but I can't spend the money, and I won't make believe. I won't assume any grace that I do not possess. I mean to be just myself."

"But you could be your best self. Is it truthful to put out your worst self? That may not be quite as bad as assuming. You are a fine scholar, you know that. But isn't education something more than just a means of making money? Why, I think that would debase it. It would lower one's moral tone as well."

"I don't seek to influence any one else. They may all do as they please, spend their money as it suits them. I only ask the same privilege."



Her tone was rather sullen.

"And I make no pretence of seeking friendships. Only—you have been very kind, very generous to bother with me. I'm not worth having any one care for me. I've no affection to give in return. I'm just fitted for the hard work-day world."

"Yet it gives us a good deal. I think we ought to give something back in human love and faith and charity. We certainly have a duty toward our fellow-creatures."

Miss Carr stared. If she asked nothing why should she give?

"We do not live altogether for ourselves. It is not right to narrow life to the one point of making money. Oh, there are better, sweeter motives."

"Are you—religious, Miss Grant?" in a slow, wondering tone.

Helen flushed. "I am trying to love my neighbor as myself. Whether I shall ever be able to love God with all my soul," and she paused a moment, adding—"That is the life work. I fail often. God gets crowded out. But like the grand old Apostle, I take courage



and go on. And I think it is a good training to be with other girls, to learn what you can do to help some of them see their duty clearer, to help train their perceptions in a moral sense even, and encourage the outgrowth of the three divine virtues. Am I preachy?" laughing with an inspiring sound.

Miss Carr had been following her with expressive, longing eyes. They were not so dull when they allowed themselves to light up.

"But most people *are* selfish—girls, especially."

"Some one says we always find what we are looking for. I think that isn't quite true, but I do feel that when we are looking for the mote in our neighbor's eye we find the whole beam. I wonder why we do not look for the good oftener."

"Oh, Miss Grant, you haven't had my years of experience. When you really come to earn your own living——"

"I want to live truly, happily even then, and follow the golden rule."

Miss Carr flushed, and then took up her



book to signify the talk was at an end. Helen turned to go.

"Come again. I must have time to think these things over. Some of them are quite new to me."

Easter was to fall quite late this year, to the joy of the girls who were in arrears. But Lent had begun, and there was more seriousness, more studiousness. Helen felt amazed at times that there were still so many things to learn, and as if she had just entered into the temple of knowledge. But it was a life-work, that was the signal encouragement. And she must not make it merely the medium of earning money, though she could not deny that money was the source of many delights. She wanted a broad, generous life. She spent many happy hours with Mrs. Yarrow, who was becoming an ideal with her.

She and Leslie seemed to be growing apart, they were both so busy. Leslie and Miss Morse were the warmest of friends. Lorraine was a great favorite with the seniors, and was trying for honors, as she had been promised a delightful trip to California as a reward. Not that



she cared any less for Helen. She was even generous enough to say—

“How that little Chardavoyne girl has improved! I was glad she cut that ring she had been training with. That sounds like political slang,” an arch smile irradiating her face. “Do you suppose it was being in love? But that Mr. Bell is a fine young fellow, and it always will rile me a little to think how complacently you gave him up. Six seniors are to be married this summer, four juniors by next Christmas! And I haven’t a lover even!” laughing merrily.

“Wasn’t that nominated in the bond?”

“To be sure. But if one had come along? Oh, Helen, give thanks, for I should have dumped all my woes upon you. And I will tell you something else that will please you. At our symposium the other evening there was to be read some wit, or wisdom, or sentiment, from this year’s work, and Lu Danvers read two exquisite little poems that were generously applauded, and then she announced that they were from Shirley Chardavoyne. I can’t imagine her being a poet, and yet she is a little



remarkable. Miss Norcross is going to send one of them to a New York magazine. And the funny thing is that she insists you were her inspiration. Oh, why did you not inspire me?"

Lorraine's tone was laughable in its mock entreaty, and her face was a study.

"I think Shirley very sweet, and have been pleased with her earnest endeavors. She is a poet."

"Do you suppose she will ever be a great one, with the world at her feet? Oh, the gifts of the gods are unequally bestowed."

"No, if you mean doing great things, writing an epic or tragedy. But the world is wide, the little wren sings its six or seven notes with as joyous a heart as the lark soaring up to heaven's gate. There are a great many lovers of little poems and songs."

The seniors were to give a Shakespearean play again, the juniors and the glee club a grand concert; there would be a tea for all the new graduates. And then Baccalaureate Sunday and a week of satisfactions or sorrows.

Helen had not let Miss Carr drop amid all the calls upon her. She could see that she soft-



ened a little, that she seemed pleased with social recognition. She allowed herself to become interested in the games and fun of the younger girls; she declared to Helen that she had been born old, since her father was fifty at that time.

With all the rest Easter gowns and hats came on the tapis. Some were to be sent from home, some were to be ordered in the larger cities by the shopping experts, others at Bedford. Happy those who had white Christmas gowns.

"I don't know what to do," Miss Carr said to Helen in a shamefaced sort of way. "There's such a whirl about clothes when you would think it ought to be class standing. I must put away my green dress and coat for another winter—two or three, maybe," with an attempt at a laugh which seemed hardly able to get out, it was such a strange occurrence.

"We will go into Bedford—that is, if you would like to have me"—hesitatingly. "We can look at styles."

"Oh, if you would!" with a long sigh of relief.

"Yes, with pleasure."



They went on Saturday with the crowd, which embarrassed Miss Carr very much. They looked at the gowns and suits at an emporium of ready-made gear fresh from New York. There were lovely garments.

"Oh, I won't be made too gay," protestingly. "I won't be dressed up like a young girl of sixteen."

"I should get one of the light gray suits, coat and skirt, trimmed with a little black, and have a gray hat of some kind. Then I'd have a voile in that sort of grayish lavender tint for best. That would do for all the exercises and make you a nice summer frock. And one of some thin black stuff——"

"I've always worn dark things. They are more durable, at least they don't soil. And I'm almost twenty-eight and poor."

"But you are going to a new place, and oh, women don't get old nowadays, for they don't wish to be pushed aside. You want to get a good salary; you are entitled to it, with all your knowledge. But you must be somewhat attractive. Look at the teachers here, several of them are forty and past."



In her heart Miss Carr was convinced she had not been on the right track. The world was too wide and varied to conform to her narrow ideas. Her stoical independence had *not* advanced her, and though she berated herself, deep in her soul there had sprung up a half-stifled desire to be liked at least a little, to feel herself a part of the great busy world.

They had some luncheon and visited a bookstore that had a small picture gallery. A throng of girls were going to the vaudeville. They went back to the emporium, where the crowd had thinned out, and inspected the suits again.

"This one would be plenty long for you," said the saleswoman. "And you are slim. It has been too small around the body or it would have been sold two or three times."

It was the one Helen had set her heart upon. She prevailed on Miss Carr to try it. If it had been made for her it could not have fitted better. It really set off her figure.

"Now the coat."

That needed some alteration, but it could be quite easily made.



"If it were not so light!" Miss Carr said, reluctantly.

"Oh, we can hardly call that light. Look at this, and this. And after you have worn it through the summer you can have it dyed. They dye so beautifully now-a-days and press without ripping apart. This skirt I am wearing was cadet blue. I had it dyed brown for fall and have worn it in the store two months. That way you have two suits," persuasively said the saleswoman.

It was very pretty with its bands of black and silk braid, and reasonable in price.

"You might have it sent," Helen ventured.

"I do like it, only——" the approval seemed forced from her.

"It is very nice and not expensive," and Helen's tone and smile were so winsome they carried the day. Then they looked at other goods, bought a few trifles, and returned home still discussing Easter and Commencement.

Early in the week the suit came, and it did truly metamorphose Miss Carr. Nothing would ever make her beautiful, but she held her head more gently erect, not in the old defiant



manner, and exercise in the clear air had improved her complexion. She did not study half the night and was not quite so thin.

Leslie admired the suit extremely.

"I am afraid I shall not dare to wear it," was the sighing remark.

"I will tell you what to do." Helen's face was full of eager fun. "Friday is the half-hour talk in Professor Gordon's room. Put on the skirt and we will take a ramble round the library and then go to the lecture. You'll get used to it and soon lose the consciousness of newness. You will come, Leslie?"

"Thank you for inviting me," was the ready reply.

"If I had some one like you three or four years ago I wouldn't have been such a guy," Miss Carr said an hour or two later. "I wish you would look over some shirt-waists I have. Two of them are quite nice, but the others——"

One was black silk, the other a really pretty piqué. The rest were worn and had been poorly laundered.

"O dear! I shall have to break into my



hoard, I am afraid, and get some decent clothes. I do hate to spend money on dress. And this year will cost me a good deal. But if I could get a better position——” wistfully.

“Put your name on the college register. Professor Wood considers you fine in mathematics and physics, and they go a long way now. I could have had a thousand dollars last year. You see, the college recommendation is a great thing. And you do want to look nice.”

“A thousand dollars! Well, if I could get that I’d buy some of the things I want—a black silk gown, for instance. I’ve always coveted one.”

“Yes, you must have that. Oh, India silk is fine for summer and not very costly.”

“How many nice ideas you have! And I like that teacher you know so well—Miss Morse.”

“Oh, you would like lots of people if you would just let yourself,” with girlish enthusiasm that was inspiring.

More than once Helen had thought of Juliet Craven, whose stiffness had thawed out under benign influences. But she had not been hard



and cold and distrustful. Helen pitied Miss Carr sincerely. She could not as yet understand how much she stood in her own light by holding herself apart from all the softer graces of life. The severe judgment that comes so early in a hard life had, as it were, molded her into that consideration of self alone, and now she was vaguely conscious of a new emotion that set her hungering for the different aspect of womanhood nourished by friendship that she had hitherto spurned.



## CHAPTER XIV

### A CONFIDENCE

THE students' parlor was brilliantly lighted up Easter even. The chapel had been adorned with flowers, and crowded with girls and visitors. It was always such a lovely service. Numbers of the girls had a sister or mother when they did not live too far away, and there had been a great scurrying about to find lodgings for them.

Shirley Chardavoyne had felt very proud of her betrothed, as they walked up the chapel aisle. It seemed to have a sacred meaning to her. She looked lovely in her spring hat with its bunches of crush roses and her pale blue Shantung frock with its frills and embroidery. There were two or three other lovers—some brothers, and afterward the campus was thronged with strollers.

Willard was cordially sweet to Helen and



the others, but there could be no question of his devotion to Shirley.

Helen and Lorraine kept together. "Leslie is so wrapped up in Miss Morse," the latter complained. "She will not miss us very much. What a lovely, happy time we've had this last year!"

Then there was the Sunday service on the most glorious day that could be imagined; a spring day of promise, sweetness, and beauty, fit to herald the grand song of the ages—"Christ has risen! Christ has risen!" Glad youthful hearts swelled with emotion, older hearts with the fervor of years. Everywhere there was the glad glowing song of the resurrection in the fragrant growth of the lawns, the pansies freshly set out, the tints of new green shading from the faint grays, the deeper coloring of pines and spruce and hemlocks with their pungent odors.

Elizabeth Carr was with Miss Morse's party. The consciousness of the new suit and a truly becoming hat lent a slight flush to her face, and a kind of refinement instead of the old severity. She would have been surprised to know that



there were some very plain girls who would have changed looks with her, for the disagreeableness had been mostly in the hopeless expression. And to-day there was a true resurrection in her heart.

Monday afternoon brought Mr. Morse among other guests. It was to be a week of pleasure for those who could afford the time, respite for the teachers. Some of them took a short journey. There were drives and rowing parties, picnics to favorite haunts, and dances every night.

Willard had to go on Tuesday. Now they could begin to count the weeks. Shirley's mother had begged a friend in New York to look after the trousseau, as she did not feel equal to it. Of course, Shirley would be married in the old home.

Mrs. Yarrow asked Helen to come in to tea one evening. An old friend of the professor's would spend the night with them, to inspect the college next day. "Don't fancy I am going to snap an admirer on you; he is a fine, intelligent man of perhaps forty-five, much interested in what is termed the woman question



and higher education. I want you to hear the two men talk. I admire this Mr. Hildreth extremely. He was at our college once, but I was engaged and very much in love. He is not what you would call a lady's man, but a courteous, high-bred gentleman."

They had the first half-hour alone. Mrs. Yarrow was much interested in the rejuvenescence of Miss Carr, and the poetical gifts of her friend Shirley that really puzzled the elder woman. They were in the full tide of interesting talk when the gentlemen entered.

Mr. Hildreth was certainly fine-looking and carried his years well. Tall, with a compact, well-rounded figure, an air that was almost military, yet nothing of the martinet in it. Brown eyes, large and well-opened, with a rather mirthful gleam in them, as if he kept well on the sunny side of life, a broad, full forehead with the soft, brown hair darker than the eyes, growing rather thin at the edge, a full beard quite well mixed with white, that almost hid the red, well-formed mouth. A picture of health, energy, and kindliness. The voice was clear, with profound vibrations, fascinating,



Helen thought, and with the inward speculation of a young girl she almost wished Mrs. Yarrow could have been free when she met him. They went out to supper after a little desultory talk. The men seemed to recur to a former topic, a high school in Mr. Hildreth's town. It was a lovely, rather aristocratic town—or had been.

Business was creeping in, as there was a navigable river on one side, and two railroads crossed the lower part of the place, which was a borough town, and had declined being made into a city. There were two flourishing public schools, but for the higher branches the students had to go to neighboring towns, quite an inconvenience. It seemed, as Helen listened to the conversation, that Mr. Hildreth had given a fine plot adjoining one of the schools, and several thousands toward the building, with the promise of equipping it with all the modern appliances.

The men discussed branches of study. Pupils would be fully trained for college entrance or teaching.

“Of course, the beginning will not be very



extensive. A thing like that has to get established. So many of the older ones are sent to boarding school whose parents would rather have them at home. There will be a preponderance of girls. You see," turning to Helen, with a smile that illumined the face, "I believe in giving the girls and the women a chance to show what education will do for them. They are coming to the fore everywhere. They are taking up the big questions of sociology—we have a woman in our state who has fought a great fight for the dependent children housed in almshouses and worse places, and she won for them the right of better homes and wholesome training. Then there is the big sanitary question, providing better houses for the poor, for working girls. Oh, the women will have their hands full. And they have the right to gain an education to fit them for those duties. They will marry, of course, but they will know better what goes to the making of a true home. I believe in giving them as fine opportunities as we give the boys. They won't run mad on athletics and baseball scores and all that."



"Oh, I heard that Miss Grant was the champion runner and is still the champion skater," laughed Professor Yarrow, with a glint of mischief.

Mr. Hildreth looked her over and smiled at the flushing face.

"Yes, you look as if you could run—and study as well. I hear you have passed and are taking a postgraduate course."

"And are coming out A1," declared the professor.

"Oh, please talk about your school," Helen entreated.

"I've been visiting several and have some ideas of my own. I propose to go through the college to-morrow. I should like to be here at the Commencement exercises; perhaps I shall come. We must have our school ready by fall. We do not mean to despise the day of small things, but we do hope to grow into an educative power and be an honor to the town."

Then the men wandered over the educational area. Now and then the guest appealed to Mrs. Yarrow, and she adroitly drew Helen into the conversation.



"Oh, I must go!" exclaimed Helen, when the clock struck ten. "I've had a most delightful evening, and, Mr. Hildreth, let me thank you for your opinion of the possibilities of girls and women. They will not all come up to the high standard in this generation, but it seems to me teachers work for the future as well as the present."

"Women's sphere is changing rapidly, we must admit that. And we men must be honorable enough to recognize it. I am glad to have met so fair an exponent of this college that I have heard so much about. Take my best wishes for your career, Miss Grant."

The professor saw her home. "That is one of the finest men I know," he said. "And he is doing so much for his town, which is a really beautiful place. He served two terms as mayor and declined the third. He is chairman of the board of education."

Helen said good-night and tripped lightly up the stairs. Leslie was writing a letter, but why her face should have turned scarlet Helen could not divine.

"I've had such a splendid time, and seen such



a splendid man!" she exclaimed. "Only—he should have married Mrs. Yarrow."

"Why, she is very happy and very much in love." And then Leslie blushed again.

"He is coming to-morrow to inspect the college. And he is building a high school! And he believes in the higher education of women! I think he will not even halt at suffrage. Oh, I feel as if I had been drinking wine or something! I'm going to bed. Don't pore over those exercises all night." Then she saw they were not exercises, but a letter.

Mr. Hildreth came the next day, accompanied by the president. The laboratory, the astronomical equipment, and the library won his highest commendation. He was introduced to a number of the teachers and had quite a conversation with Professor Blake, who brought out some of the records.

"I see this Miss Grant won the prize the first year and skipped a year. She must be a good student. I met her last evening and consider her a superior girl, an all-round girl."

"She is indeed that," was the reply.

Helen and Leslie saw him for a few



moments. "I do not wonder you were enthusiastic," Leslie said.

After a few days Helen began to feel that Leslie was acting queerly. She would look at her sometimes with such an abstracted air and flush when she met Helen's glance. She was very sweet and her voice had something elusive in it that puzzled and would not be dismissed. It was not any quality of coldness—was it the thought of the parting to come presently?"

"Leslie, what is it?" she cried one afternoon when it was too rainy to go out for recreation hour. The gymnasium and the court would be full of the younger girls.

"Oh, Helen, I want to tell you—I couldn't bear to keep the secret from you. The sweetest thing in life has happened to me, but I can hardly make it real," and her voice was tremulous, her face ardent with a subtle, intangible, yet hesitating, atmosphere.

"The sweetest thing in life is supposed to be love," returned Helen, with a certain wide intentness in her eyes. "Leslie——"

The girl clasped her arms around Helen's neck, and hid her blushing face in the hollow



between throat and shoulder. Helen felt her heart beat.

"We have been such friends—well, I couldn't have kept it from you while we were together every day. I should have felt guilty. And it still seems unreal to me, as if such a blessed gift could hardly come to me, as if it should have gone to some higher, nobler woman——"

Helen was thinking. There was no one last summer, there had been no visitor at the college. There was Christmas—a sudden light flashed upon her.

"It is not Mr. Morse?" Yet her own thought answered in the affirmative.

"Yes," was the low-breathed answer.

"But—his sister. They were to have a home together, after a while——"

"Yes. His house will always be home to her. She thought of it when we were in the city at Christmas. You were with the Bells so much. But it never entered my mind. I had thought of you—he has always admired you so much, and Miss Craven. After we returned he wrote to me about a book he wanted me to



read and tell him how I thought it would appeal to young people. Then we wrote several letters—not very often. And when he was here at Easter—well, perhaps no one can quite tell how—a look or a word or a pressure of the hand makes the soul leap up in indescribable joy. Oh, I can't talk about it as Shirley does, and yet I think her whole heart is in it. Only you are to know for a long while, as it must be a year's engagement. I shall go on teaching and learning many things that I am ignorant of now. It seems such a sacred, awesome thing to give away yourself; when other girls or women do it, it doesn't come home to you with that overwhelming force. And then to hold another life while you both do live, without marring it, without hindering the work a clergyman is set to do——”

“And Miss Morse?” Helen wondered about her.

“Oh, I think it could not have been if she had not approved. They are so much to each other. She is a born teacher and her whole heart is in it. She understands girls and brings out the best there is in them, raises their moral



ideas, awakes their ambition. She was so good to me when I first came here I once said, 'I never can repay you,' and she replied, 'You can do it for some other person who needs it. That is the coin going round the world that never demands back any change.' And since Christmas she has been so cordially sweet."

"Leslie, I don't know what to say," returned Helen, in a tone of deep emotion. "That I am glad, a thousand times glad, of your great happiness is a small and weak expression. For I know you will be very happy. I truly like Mr. Morse, have since the very first. I think knowing him, with his high conscientious aims, led me to see what was lacking in Willard for me. I could not be content in his life, but Shirley will be superlatively happy and make him so with her delightful adoration, which is not silly after all. And Mrs. Bell will supply what she lacked in her mother. But your life must be on a wider plane, the companion of fine moral strength."

"That is so, Helen. How do you come to understand what Miss Van Meter calls the deep things of the soul? We must always



keep friends, dear," and the soft, full voice trembled.

Helen answered with a fervent kiss.

"I'm not going to bore you. I think you must be half crazy with lovers. Even that Howland girl dumped all her love troubles on you, and said you 'were the sweetest thing, that she never could have lived without you.' Why do lovers want to quarrel? But I think we shall go on learning about our duties toward each other and growing into the new life by degrees. If *we* could be together the next year!"

"I don't want to think about next year yet. Something always comes."

"I shall not tell Lorraine until vacation. We shall all be so busy. And I have promised her a visit. You will have to consent also."

Helen smiled.

There were very busy days. Helen had always kept ahead with her work, so she had some leisure to bestow upon others. She was to be in the play, she was a member of the glee club, and umpire of two of the games. And here were all the lovely May days, the rambles



in the fields and woods perfecting botany lessons and the many joys that had never seemed so exquisite before.

She did not drop her missionary work with Miss Carr, whose vision was gradually widening. She was beginning to learn, with a mortifying sense, that the fault she charged upon others lay mostly with herself, that she had never gone out to meet overtures, that her self-denials had not been so heroic as she had imagined and had gained her no credit. Shabbiness was not a virtue, except under compulsion. One ought to pay proper respect to the demands of the circle in which she wished to move. She enjoyed her new suit so much, she had a feeling of ease instead of mortification. And in a shy, half-embarrassed manner she began to return the recognitions proffered her.

"Did you ever see any one improve more than that Miss Carr?" said one of the seniors. "She looks five years younger and really she has quite a bit of manners. I think she must have had a hard time somewhere along life. She's a fine scholar and has worked her way through college, and we all think that a most



commendable thing. Maybe we might have been a little more cordial."

"But she was such a fright and so ungracious. She has fine eyes when she allows you to see them. Girls, I am afraid we who are blessed with a fair share of good looks do not understand how hard it is to carry about with you always a severely unattractive face. I'd try to make myself pretty. I'd cultivate smiles. I'd take lessons in voice culture, in manners, in attire."

"But if you had no money to pay for them?" suggested another.

"Then I'd get a book and practise before the glass. It is a duty you owe the world not to be a blot upon it. There was a time when this was considered vanity, but now homeliness is vexation of spirit, a fault to be remedied, a duty to the world you live in."

"Girls, it is wonderful how much you learn in a four years' college term besides what you get out of books."

And now examinations were coming on. The honor list was sent in, subjects for the brief essays, and the valedictorian appointed.



How queer it seemed to be out of it all, Helen thought. She wondered about Miss Carr, who waylaid her in the corridor with a face fairly transfigured and held before her the verdict of the college board.

"Oh, you've won your degree!" Helen exclaimed with great gladness. "I didn't think you could miss it."

"Helen Grant, you've been an inspiration." Then she rushed to her room and threw herself on the bed, crying tears of joy, of sorrow too, that she should so have wronged herself and refused some of the best things of life.

"Who do you suppose has the freshman prize?" cried one of the girls on the campus. "And there is a real romance about it."

"Oh, who?" Helen was at once interested.

"The freshmen have covered themselves with glory this year. Two stood first, one second, four third. The class was paid a glowing compliment."

"But who had the prize?"

"Well, it was this way. There was a Janet Archer, a quiet sort of a girl with red hair, studious and rather reserved, and an Emma



Jane Powers, an all-round jolly girl with a first-class memory. They were just even, perfect. Miss Archer's name happened to be read first. And, of course, it had to be decided some way. Then Miss Powers made the loveliest little speech. She said her father had promised her a hundred dollars if she entered the sophomores, and he was able and meant to give her the whole college course, so she preferred that Miss Archer should take it from the college rather than a gift from her, as that was what she should do. And then Miss Archer wept a little weep, and really it was touching."

"It certainly was noble in her," said Helen, and then she sauntered around until she had found the girl, who was saying: "I'm going to run away. It really was nothing! I didn't want the money."

She ran almost into Helen's arms, who grasped one and slipped it in hers, leading her aside from the noisy group.

"Yes, you must take my congratulations, too. I had the prize and enjoyed the glory of it, which is not to be despised."

"Oh, Miss Grant, I'll tell *you*. I found a



month ago that she was working might and main for it and that she really needed it. I didn't. I believe father is going to be quite a rich man on account of some land he has sold. But he's very proud of me," flushing, "and it would have been a great pleasure to him. I really could not have made up my mind to fall behind, for his sake, so I went on. And it came out this way. I think he will be just as proud when I've told him all the story. As you say—I've won the glory of it. Only I wish the girls did not make such a fuss. Miss Archer thinks she can only stay the sophomore year and then must teach. But maybe something will happen. You can't just tell what the years will bring. But I know father will care most for the honor, and mother will think about the money. She isn't stingy either," and Miss Powers gave a bright, gay laugh.

Helen pressed her hand warmly.

"I like it so here. There's so much fun and the study is splendid, and as for the girls they are just at the topmost round—that is, most of them," qualifying the statement with a touch



of humor about the lips. "Don't you feel sorry to go away?"

"Yes, I do," Helen returned, frankly.

It was quite the talk of the classes for a few days.

"I wonder if she could have done it if she was poor and wanted the money?" Elizabeth Carr said. "For if they had drawn she might have been the lucky one."

"Her manner of doing it was so gracious and sweet." But Helen recognized that the money at home might have been a factor. She knew of girls who would not have yielded so readily.

"Oh," she added, with sudden emphasis, "I want you to believe there is some kindness, some love of one's neighbor in the world."

"I am trying, too. But the doubts and the selfish thoughts come first."

"Life is a sort of battle-ground. And we must be good soldiers," smiling. There were tears in Miss Carr's eyes.



## CHAPTER XV

### AT THE GATE OF THE FUTURE

THEN they talked of the years to come and what they should do. Purposes in life, if one did not have to earn one's living, had a rather vague, high-sounding designation.

"Summing up of the whole matter—conclusion. Some of us will have to work for daily bread, others will not be compelled to——"

"I am not, but I am going to all the same," said a tall, vigorous-looking girl. "I think teaching has the highest and widest influence, and I want that. Otherwise these four years will be wasted. I must be of some use. I cannot be a drone."

"All very high and noble, May Schermerhorn. But how about crowding out some girl who perhaps has an old mother or a decrepit father to support and has no means but her chance to labor? Why don't you take up set-



tlement work, if you are so strenuous on the labor question?"

The young woman gave a disdainful curl to her lip. "You do the best work in the sphere you are best fitted for," she replied. "Settlement work would disgust me. If that had been my aim I would have left here two years ago."

"Oh well, don't let us dispute when we are so near separating. I'm going to a comfortable, lovely home. Mother is quite an invalid, my little sister was hurt in a bad fall and will always have a spinal trouble. There are two boys. We all have a moderate income of our own. Mother is very fond of the little amenities of life, afternoon teas and social evenings. It may be ignoble after Latin and French and Italian, and isms and ologies, but I'm just going in for an agreeable and pleasant home that will keep the young fellows in evenings until the dangerous years are passed, give mother pleasure, comfort a lonely little girl and teach her a few things to help her bear her burden. Last summer I was wild about newspaper work. Irene Sinclair, of last year, is



having no end of a good time. But I am going to take up the nearest duty."

"Bravo, Carrie Dean! Send me an invitation to some of the teas. I expect I shall dance and flirt and marry. Just think how butterflies adorn the summer scenery."

"Some one ought to be jotting down class prophecies for Nora Bacon. Oh, here she comes. We are talking over our ideal life and you know you are to make it the most ridiculously impossible thing. Helen Grant, you are not in this, you are a year too late or too early. But I will read yours out of charity. You will be a college president, a lecturer—I think a suffragist, you are so devoted to Mrs. Yarrow. And you will end by marrying a poor professor."

They all laughed. There was much merry chaffing going on. How long ago last year appeared to Helen. Then the parting seemed almost forever. But she should come back to alumni banquets, she should see the professors, the under teachers—she did not mean to step out of everything. Friendships were the golden beads in the rosary of life.



Oh, what hurrying and scurrying for the next three days! It was well that Sunday came to tranquilize them. It was a soft grey day that set the distant hills in a shadowy mist and gave a wonderful sweetness to roses and violets and syringas. The chapel was crowded. Mothers and even fathers were there to listen to the parting advice and blessings invoked upon their daughters. There was a large graduating class with the postgraduates among them. Elizabeth Carr in her neat, pretty voile frock, with lace trimmings, and her hat in which there were actually some pink roses! She listened with a new, reverent attention, and when the class rose to receive the president's parting benison, she resolved to lead a new, better, and broader life, and for years turned back to this day as the inspiration of what was best; not money, not even success, but love to one's neighbor. The grand old hymn thrilled her as nothing had ever done.

There was the organ concert in the evening with refrains from the violin club. Then the mist cleared away and the moon came out and the grounds were full of beautiful groups



greeting one another, girls proud of lovers and brothers. Mr. Morse had arranged with a friend for his services, as he would not have missed this.

Then Class Day and Commencement. After that mirth and jollity.

"I wasn't so bad after all," said Shirley, swinging Helen's hand. "There were only four conditions. But I should be frightened to death among the juniors. And don't you think it just as good to make a happy home and love the people around you as to study at things you don't understand? I'm going to be very happy and make Willard happy and that is enough to undertake. We shall have a home in the city and Willard's mother is coming to show me how to keep house. And I want you to come whenever you can, like a dear sister. Oh, I don't know what I should have done without you!"

Helen kissed her tenderly. Was she indeed reaping the fruits of her endeavor? And last fall she had felt quite discouraged.

Miss Powers caught her presently. "I want you to see my father and mother," she said,



joyously. "And father was so glad that I gave up the prize. I brought Miss Archer around to see him and he liked her at once, only he thought she ought to have some good country living and nothing to worry about in vacation. And he said," Miss Powers colored daintily, "that if at any time I saw any nice little favor I could do for her, I was to do it. We're going in the sophomores together, you know. I think I'll ask her to be my room-mate. Oh, and father is wondering if he could see the lady who was president of the college and really had voted. He is interested in these western states, but mother declares nothing would ever induce her to move out there, though I think father just teases her. Come."

Mr. and Mrs. Powers were at a booth sipping cream and gazing around. Helen remembered her at once. She was modestly attired, though she did have the unmistakable marks of a countrywoman. Mr. Powers had a sort of brisk, well-to-do appearance, with a very intelligent face. He shook hands warmly.

"I've been hearing about you, Miss Grant. You look like a girl who would take a prize,



and I dare say you were proud enough, you and your folks," and he laughed genially. "We're proud, too, though I think my Emmie did just right. What crowds of girls, and how pretty they look in fuss and furbelows! And my, how smart some of them were! Now that girl who talked on 'What we owe to education' was just fine. I don't know so much about stars, only I like to go out of a clear night and watch them. And Jupiter's moons, that another started on—why, it almost made me feel as if Jupiter was a world like this and had people in it. It used to be supposed that women's brains couldn't reach above much but baking and churning and so on; and now splendid butter is made by machinery, and there's bread-mixers for small families and great steam bakeries. Women are rather contrary sometimes about new things, but if you can save your time and strength I say save it."

"You are quite a new man," Helen responded, laughingly. "Progressive."

"I don't care for old methods simply because they are old. You may have heard about when they went to mill on horseback they put



the grist in one end of the sack and a stone in the other to balance, not having wit enough to put grist in both ends. I've seen some people nearly as smart in these days."

He wrinkled up his face in a shrewd, humorous manner, as he gave a wholesome laugh.

"Emmie was telling me about a college president out in one of these new states who voted and all that. I suppose people pester her to death, wanting to see her, and I'd just like to be one of the pesterers. And she went and married after all and came here, where women can't vote."

"But she has a man to vote for her," remarked Mrs. Powers, decisively. "Maybe she didn't think it any great shakes after all."

"She is a very charming woman," said Helen. "They were wandering about a while ago. Are you going to stay here some time? If so, I'll see if I can find them."

"Yes, I am very comfortable. I never saw so many pretty girls; so the college doesn't spoil their good looks nor make guys of them. But zounds, what a sight of money all this finery costs!"



"We only have Commencement once a year," returned Helen, gayly.

Then she turned and glanced over the happy, moving throng. For even the disappointed girls who hadn't passed or taken honors when they were certain their work had been "just as good," were chatting and laughing or eating bonbons or ice cream. O dear! wasn't it going to be the proverbial needle in the haystack? One and another caught her hand. There was the Morse party and Mr. Morse beckoned to her. Then a tall man came within range of her vision—where had she seen him before? He was talking very earnestly. Oh, there was Professor Yarrow! She threaded her way in and out, taking the tall figure for a beacon.

"Oh, Miss Grant!" exclaimed the professor. "We were looking for you. I have never seen quite this sight before. You remember Mr. Hildreth?"

"Oh, yes!" her face lighting up with pleasure.

"Well, young lady, the college may be justly proud of the finished product it turns out. I



was sorry not to hear something from you. But most of the speakers had their subject well in hand. I have been unusually interested. I was a little late, too. There is no need of asking if you are well."

His look of admiration brought a rich flush to her cheek.

"I wonder if you could spare Mrs. Yarrow for a little while?" persuasively.

"What deep-laid scheme is this?" and the professor eyed her with comic sharpness.

"I may as well tell the truth," laughed Helen. "I am not good at make-believes. Can you recall the girl who gave up the freshman prize?"

"Oh, yes—it is a very sweet story of a high-minded girl. Tell it, Helen. I know it will interest Mr. Hildreth."

"Her parents are here—plain, sensible people. The father is very much taken up with the subject of woman's education. You see, it has really penetrated the country places. And he wants to see a woman who has had the courage to vote. It isn't impertinent curiosity, either, for he is very well-bred. Mrs. Powers



is a conservative," and the amused light in Helen's face was charming.

"Why——" Mrs. Yarrow looked inquiringly at her husband.

"Oh, yes, let us go. I think this Miss Powers has not been in my classes, but I would like to see her."

They made their way through the throng.

"It doesn't look like conventual seclusion," remarked Mr. Hildreth. "Young men seem quite in evidence."

"Oh, yes. This is a gala day, a day of privileges. Though we are not severely restricted."

He wondered a little why this bright girl had no attendant.

Emma Jane was on the lookout for them, nervous lest the lady should refuse. And she did not want her father to have a slight to recall.

"I'm so glad——" grasping Helen's hand, her face overjoyed, her smile radiant.

Helen introduced her and then presented her party to Mr. and Mrs. Powers.

"Will Mrs. Yarrow take my seat?" and Mr.



Powers rose politely. "I am extremely glad to meet you, madam—and the professors——"

"I am a visitor like yourself," exclaimed Mr. Hildreth. "And I should enjoy having a young daughter like this one," bowing to Emma Jane, who flushed warmly.

"I wouldn't have missed this sight for a great deal," said Mr. Powers, earnestly. "I have never seen a girl's college before. I have a son in a technical institute, but their examinations seem not to have so many pleasures connected with them. I can't say that I should aim at being cook for this establishment."

That caused a general laugh.

"We have but this one girl, and I mean to give her all the education she will take. The days of our grandmothers have passed by, never to return, I hope."

"But they were good, useful days," interposed Mrs. Powers. "They made good wives and mothers."

"There is no doubt of that," returned her husband. "But the present generation would be foolish to spin and weave and spend weeks sewing long seams."



"That the sewing machine can do so easily for us and so well," remarked Mrs. Yarrow.

"But I've taught my girl to sew. And I mean some day that she shall learn house-keeping. Not that I am opposed to education."

"The educated woman is the most independent. And in this country, where fortunes are liable to change, a woman ought to be fitted to become a poor man's wife, or to help take care of a family if she is left with one. I do not call the smattering of fashion and society an education," said Mrs. Yarrow.

"Thank you for that!" exclaimed Mr. Powers, earnestly. "I heard you had a houseful of girls out West somewhere. Not as large as this, I guess."

"Oh, no, no!" laughing. "But I tried to train them to do honest work. Truth everywhere is one of the foundation stones, I take it. And to live useful lives whether in the kitchen or parlor, the store or the factory, or even if they find their way outside of what used to be considered regulation lines. They are success-



ful as doctors—in the newer countries they farm, they run business, and with us they even go into politics.”

“That is what I would like to hear about.” Mr. Powers looked deeply interested. “You believe the time will come——”

“It is a big subject,” she returned, in her most charming manner. “We took it at its best estate. Many of our women came from the East and were well educated, understood the principles of government. We had no great horde of foreign population, ignorant and brutish. My feeling is rather for a restriction of suffrage, for men and women both. We cannot afford to give up our country, won at such a sacrifice of blood and suffering, to crowds of people to whom liberty means only license. Personally, I prefer an educational test, and a knowledge of truth and uprightness. But the world is learning what evolution truly means.”

“I’d just like to hear you make a speech at a political meeting, you’re so reasonable. I’m sure I’m greatly obliged to you. I’m a plain sort of a fellow, but I mean my boys and my



girl shall know what life is really for, and be of some use to the world."

"Then you will be doing your duty to the future citizen," and she smiled graciously.

Mr. Hildreth had been talking to the two girls and listening, proud of the tolerant tone of his friend's wife and her cordial manner. Then the professor asked if they would not like to inspect some of the college buildings, and they resumed their walk.

Helen was at liberty for the evening. There were a number of the girls she wished to see and to say good-by to. There was so much merriment no one could be really sad. A few were going away. The next day would be the day of partings.

"Oh, Miss Carr!" she exclaimed, coming upon her suddenly. "I've been wondering——"

"I wasn't really lonesome. And—somehow I did not seem to envy all this gayety if I was not in it. I had a lovely talk with a lady who has been in Japan at a mission station for five years, and was graduated here. She's not a bit better-looking than I am, but she had such a



sweet voice. She said all the Japanese women have, and sweet natures. I feel as if I have been in a shell, a good hard one, and was just crawling out, and learning what kindly people there are in the world. Yes, I have had a nice time and enjoyed seeing other people happy."

"Oh, I knew you would if you only looked at life in the right light, if you were glad of the joys that came to others. Sometimes I think the sweetest enjoyments come through the happiness of others, if just then we have none of our own."

"You overflow so into other lives, Miss Grant. You never seem to have any lack."

"Something has always come to me before I really asked for it," she returned, joyously.

"I've been glad to go away from every place but this. It seemed as if I had worn it out, that there was nothing more for me. But I should like to stay here and teach. The girls have made fun of me, I know, and called me an old maid, a mummy, and all that. But I could overlook it and try to be more human, to think good opinion was worth an effort to win."



"You will win it somewhere else, I am quite sure, now that you have made so earnest a beginning."

Girls came and went with their expressions of regret that Helen was really going from their circle. The moon shone serenely in the broad blue heaven, the colored lanterns swung in the shaded paths, and the chain of electric lights made a fairyland of the scene. Glad smiling faces, merry laughs, and joyous voices were the music.

Mrs. Yarrow met her again presently.

"Miss Grant, I'm going to ask a favor," she exclaimed. "If you have made no immediate engagement will you spend several days with me? I don't know when we shall meet again, and we have had such a sort of snatchy time for a month—that's ridiculously girlish, I know, for a woman who has had the effrontery to vote. What a nice, every-day sort of man that Mr. Powers is—he suggested a Westerner to me in his courage and intelligence. But now my proposal—will you come?" glancing up persuasively.

"Why—I could. Oh, thank you! I would



like it immensely. It will be a break in the parting sorrow."

"Then come to supper, sure, but as early as you can. There will be ever so much to talk over."

The great clock on the tower sounded out midnight and the revel was over. Chattering girls sauntered regretfully to their halls. Never had they enjoyed a Commencement quite as much. The air was full of good-nights in every key.

Helen took the faded wreath out of her hair, but put her roses in water. Willard had brought them to her with his dear love.

"I'm just tired through and through!" exclaimed Leslie. "But did you keep any tab on Lorraine? She looked lovely. And that cousin of Ruth Challis's was certainly smitten with her. Mr. Denman was proud and pleased, and after we have made our visit he is going to New Mexico on some mining business and Lorraine and her mother are to do southern California. She will have a glad, care-free life, and I hope she will marry. Girls of that stamp make lovely wives and mothers."





HELEN TOOK THE FADED WREATH OUT OF HER HAIR. — *Page 352.*







"And of our stamp?" pulling out her pretty laces and laying them in their lavender-scented box. It always brought up a vision of Mrs. Van Dorn.

Leslie smiled at the half-fun.

"I can't imagine your future, Helen, unless you are a college president. And yet you are capable of high heroic love."

"I hope it won't end by my having some poor, weak brother man to support. That is what these high heroic women often do."

"Oh, I can't imagine that of you, Helen!" and Leslie laughed.

"It's funny, but I haven't any ideal man to haunt my dreams. For several virtues I have liked several men, slightly travestied from Shakespeare. And the trouble is I go on liking them. Willard—don't be jealous—Mr. Morse——"

"I half wished him for you."

"And he suited himself. I think his choice admirable. Oh, my dear, you will make a lovely minister's wife."

"And there was the young man who came to



Grey Court—that you had known so long before. Where is he?”

“I heard he entered at Yale, and that is all.”

Had she expected anything else? She could not truly tell, only she knew he would work with his whole soul wherever he was.

“I ought to tell Lorraine. I really do love her. It has been on my conscience, and she has not suspected. But I can’t drag it out tomorrow morning. It will keep until our visit to her. Good-night.”

The morning was cloudy. “It would have been heartless and wicked for the sun to shine,” declared one of the girls. There was much running to and fro, trunks and boxes carried through the corridor, pathetic farewells now and then for the last time with many. Some went to the library and apostrophized it in endearing terms. Stages and express wagons went away loaded.

“It’s not an awful long good-by,” exclaimed Lorraine, “and so I shall not weep if you *are* the two dearest girls in the world. Will you come down and plan your visit with mother,



while I dump a few mementos in Leslie's den? Oh, you splendid girls!"

They arranged about the visit, which was to be ten days hence. And then a cordial rather than a sad farewell.

"I think I shall do the same thing," announced Helen, returning to the room. "I have so many pretty things at Grey Court. I've given some to that Miss Powers, who is going to make a fine scholar. She is growing quite discriminating. Look after her, Leslie; it will pay. And all these you may put by for the future rectory. You are going to be rather poor, Leslie, for I think this conscientious young man will not be looking out for the loaves and fishes. So, dear, begin to save up."

Leslie blushed and laughed. "And what are you going to do?"

"Didn't I tell you? Mrs. Yarrow has invited me for several days. I'm really in love with her. Much education has not turned her brain nor spoiled her for the womanly duties of life, which as a general thing mean house-keeping. She broils a steak deliciously. Are you going to-day?"



"Yes. They," with a delicate emphasis, "are going home to interview my brother. Mr. Morse is very honorable and courteous. I have written."

"Afterward I will go to Grey Court and then meet you at Lorraine's."

So that planning was done. Helen packed a box of books and what she called traps, and filled her trunk with clothes. There would be a thorough renovation of the college during vacation.

Helen hunted up Miss Carr.

"I am going to Mrs. Daly's to board for a fortnight," she said. "Professor Blake has handed me two applications that I shall answer. I've no special tie anywhere, and I can't afford pleasure journeys. I'd as lief stay here all vacation."

"I want you and Leslie to remain the best of friends," Mr. Morse said, with his good-by. "I honor true college friendships. Generally you have tried them, and the dross has been cast aside. My sister has a very warm interest in you, and I hope it will go on all our lives."

"I am sure it will," responded Helen.



Then they went their way. Helen gave a hearty thanksgiving for her friend's happiness. Shirley, too, had her share. Willard had been driving her around to old haunts during the morning. She was so bright and happy, she made no secret of her love, but there was a charming delicacy that seemed to imply there was something back of it all, a sweetness that would never be exhausted, a fountain no years would drain.

"I just wish you were going to New York with us," she said. "I am to meet my friends and shop and I don't know a bit about it, but I'm going to be married in something soft and fluffy—I'm too small for satin and stiffness. And really, the wedding will not be anything much, there's no great neighborhood, for the young people go away, it is so dull. I wish it could be in a church in New York and have you all, but mother wouldn't consent, and Eloise is counting on seeing all the finery. Then we are coming home by slow stages, Willard says," and she smiled enchantingly, lifting her radiant face to his; "stopping at the fine cities that I've never seen, and afterward



visiting my new sisters, then having just a delightful home, with Mamma Bell to show us what is right and proper. And we have a grand secret for you some time, Helen," laughing with dainty sweetness.

Willard stooped and kissed her.

"Oh, you needn't be afraid. I could keep it seven years if it was necessary," she returned, archly.

Helen kissed her and wished her all happiness. Yes, Willard was surely satisfied.



## CHAPTER XVI

### JUST AMONG GIRLS

"THIS is coming early!" exclaimed Mrs. Yarrow, with a half-upbraiding smile.

"There has been so much to do," returned Helen. "So many farewells. Why, it seems as if I had half the collegians on my hands," with a blithe laugh.

"Parting must have been a 'sweet sorrow.'"

"It's queer, but I don't feel it half as much as I did last year. Whether I am growing hardened—but it does seem as if the class banquet made you sad in spite of all the merry quips, and I could skip it this year. Do you realize that I am one of the alumni and have a sacred right to come back to my *alma mater*? I dare say I shall be homesick for the classic shades."

"And you can visit me as well. I do not feel inclined to give you up."

"Thank you," with a pretty nod.



Helen wondered if after years of teaching she would keep this lovely expression of content. Perhaps it was love and marriage.

"Tell me about your pretty friend, the poet."

Helen was really enthusiastic.

"You have had a number of outside romances, it seems. Some day it will come your turn. Oh, there are the men."

"The men?" repeated Helen.

"Mr. Hildreth and the professor."

They came up on the porch and shook hands cordially with the young girl. She flushed a little at the visitor's scrutiny.

"Now we will proceed to the banqueting hall," said Mrs. Yarrow, rising. "A pretentious announcement to a summer tea."

The table was beautiful with flowers and fruit, and the hostess charming. It was even as if the professor laid aside his collegiate habit and became unwontedly gay. The social cup seemed to exhilarate them all, and they lingered, scattering bright repartees about until the gas had to be lighted.

"Now let us retire to the coolness of the porch. What a magnificent night! In the



moonlight I can almost imagine the college some storied pile of England."

"You have enjoyed it very much, Miss Grant?" began Mr. Hildreth. "And I am interested to know what plans you have for the future."

"I think I have not made any definite plans—only to teach," she answered, slowly.

"Then I have something to lay before you. I have been talking it over with my friends and they have selected you to fill a position that I have been considering. They have told you about our new high school at Westfield, where we should have had one long since, but we have been a rather sleepy, self-complacent town until a few years ago. I tried to move in this matter and have not succeeded until now. It is a fine new, modern building with a large exercise court out of doors and all the necessary equipments within, and adjoins our best public school. There will not be large classes this year—we have been planning for the future. And I want to select a teacher who can enter into the spirit of the thing, who is fresh, and enthusiastic, and up-to-date, who has



some elasticity and can go outside of a textbook. Some one has to discover it—why not a woman? And progression. The old paths were excellent for their day, but if we can tack some true and new knowledge upon them let us do so.”

Helen's face went from pale to red under his scrutinizing eyes, and yet they were kindly and won her favor.

“I do not know—it takes me so by surprise—whether I am fit—I have had no experience in teaching——” she returned, disjointedly.

“I have been looking over your record and have the endorsement of two of your professors. I have not consulted any others, but my friend here is quite up in college gossip. I shall not press you for an answer now. I'd like you to see Westfield. It would be a pleasant place to live in. There is some excellent society, the nucleus of a fine library, and we are not far from a large first-class city.”

“I wonder if I ought to consider it,” hesitatingly. She had not looked for such a proffer to come into her life just now.

Mr. Hildreth was watching her. “I shall



have the decision altogether in my hands, so you need not be troubled about that," he continued, encouragingly.

"She has an opportunity of teaching in the boarding school where she was prepared for college, but it is not a large institution, though it ranks high," said Mrs. Yarrow.

"Whether it would be better to begin in a less ambitious manner——" interposed Helen.

"No, I should take the broader opportunity. It would give you a higher standing in case you wanted to change, but I think we should not let you go. The principal of the school is a fine, generous-minded man, and you would have a friend in any emergency. You can have from now until the first of August to consider."

"Oh, I do thank you for the high compliment," Helen began, much moved. "And I will truly consider. I am inclined to accept the flattering offer at once, but we may both think of some point we wish to discuss more thoroughly."

He was pleased with her reply. And though he did not seem exigent he admired her bright, earnest face, her steady, truth-lighted eyes, the



resolute mouth that held much sweetness in its gracious curves. He liked her voice, too; it was inspiring, uplifting. Withal she had nothing pedantic or self-conscious about her.

Then they went to talking of other things. He and the professor had first met in Germany and taken quite a tour among educational institutions there. Certainly he was a man of wide intelligence, and Helen was quite charmed with him, it being a new experience to her.

He had to leave them the next morning, and Helen was really sorry. They exchanged addresses, but he admitted that there would be only one satisfactory answer.

"Oh, Helen, I do think you must take it," Mrs. Yarrow said, decisively. "You can trust Mr. Hildreth; husband thinks him a man out of a thousand. Well, that may be a large figure," laughing. "But I do like men who see possibilities in women and are willing to give them a fair chance. And the salary will be the same as they would pay a young man graduate. I am very glad you decided to take this last course."

"And Professor Yates is earnest that I shall



go on doing some astronomical work. I begin to feel as if I would turn into a sort of abnormal woman. And, shall I confess, a folly?" a gay, humorous smile breaking over her sunny countenance. "I am extravagantly fond of dancing."

"And I taught a class when I first went out to Hatfield," was the amused reply.

Helen enjoyed her visit beyond measure. Mrs. Yarrow was different from any friend she had met yet, more versatile than Miss Morse, quite as tender and receptive as Mrs. Bell, and she did like the wide range of thought, the new ideas she started in conversation. Practical as she was, she was steeped in poetry of the finest kind.

"Oh!" Helen exclaimed with a delighted yet longing sigh. "I wish I knew as much as you!"

"Perhaps you will when you are as old."

"But you don't seem——" flushing and checking herself. "You are just like a girl, a splendid, sensible, generous girl."

"And voting didn't spoil me," vivaciously. Helen almost grudged the time, she was en-



joying herself so much, but she felt she must call on Miss Carr. And not an hour too soon. Miss Carr had lapsed into a fit of despondency. Much as she thought she disliked her kind she missed them sorely, though she would not acknowledge it.

"I'm not worth all the solicitude," she said, roughly. "I'm sure to have black days when I wish I had been made so that no one would feel interested in me, and I almost hate all the prosperous people who win love so easily."

"And you try to undo all my good work."

Helen *would* smile, giving her a steady glance.

"That is ungrateful, too," she admitted. "But you cannot be dependent on friends. I should scorn to be. I am strong enough to stand alone."

"Strength isn't everything. And this splendid day—let us go out and take a walk."

"I shall bore you to death. I've not heard a word. Suppose I shouldn't find anything to do—after spending all this money?"



"There are registries for teachers—I think the president would tell you—oh, I know Professor Yarrow would."

Miss Carr gave a desperate sigh.

"Come," insisted Helen again, and out they went. The delightful walk with all nature abloom, a discussion on botany and finding some new wild flowers quite restored her.

Then Helen called on Professor Blake and laid the case before him.

"Oh, you tell her not to worry. With her record there will be no fear of her finding a situation. I'll keep an eye open. Our students do not go begging very often."

Delightful as it all was, Helen had to say good-by. There seemed nothing but visits. How did she come to have so many dear friends?

She mused over Mrs. Aldred's kindly letter. That had been an ideal life to her, and now she was not sure she wanted to restrict herself. There were other flights; would she have the courage to essay them? But it was gracious and most kind to be remembered with such sincere love, and be proffered the position if noth-



ing better came to hand. Juliet, too, would gladly take her as a governess.

There was a warm welcome awaiting her from the whole household. Juliet had changed in an indescribable manner, grown a little stouter, and the serene face had a quiet joy in every line, as if life was full and satisfying. Ah, if Miss Carr could have some of this ease and content. But she could not imagine the two affiliating.

There was so much to talk about, nearly a whole year's experience.

"I knew you would hardly miss me," Juliet said. "It was not like the first graduation. And I was so much engrossed with many things. I saw your pretty young couple last week. Willard telegraphed me to meet them. Helen, I think you were wise. He will be very happy with Shirley. She adores him."

"And I am not an adoring girl," laughing. "If ever I should marry it must be a man with a high, earnest purpose in life and who can stand quite alone when occasion requires, who is not bent on making money to provide me with the good things of life. He must be to me



guide and counselor in any moments of weakness or discouragement. His manhood must be fine and strong," then laughing suddenly, in a gay mood, "I dare say I shall be in Aunt Jane's category of the women who go all through the woods and bring home a crooked stick at last."

"There is Mr. Morse. He admired you——"

Juliet studied her friend intently.

"And he, too, has gone the way of my admirers. Leslie Brooks is to be his wife."

"Helen!"

"Oh, don't use that upbraiding tone. Why, he admired *you*, too. I once had a fancy you would make the ideal couple."

Juliet blushed. "I like him very much. He is a fine, strong Christian gentleman. One could trust him to the uttermost. I do not think he would ever fail in any duty, in any crisis. But we should spoil each other's lives instead of rounding them out perfectly. I cannot imagine him being the appanage of a rich woman, neither can I fancy myself a clergy-



man's wife. I should be awkward and ill at ease. I should have to relinquish my lovely home and the joys it affords me, or take him entirely out of his sphere. Oh, you see, it would never have done," and she gave a soft, heart-free laugh. "Leslie is a wiser choice, I think. She will make him an admirable wife. Well, we will both wait a little and grow old together."

"That is delightfully encouraging," in a tender, convincing manner that showed she was quite heart-whole.

There was a patter of dainty feet, a birdlike call, and a fairy creature ran into the room throwing herself on Juliet's lap.

"What a cherub! Where did you pick her up?"

Helen looked at the child in amazement. She might have been a little beyond two years, her head a mass of golden rings like an aureole, her large eyes were blue with the purplish shade, the lashes much darker, a kind of golden brown, and the face was radiant with smiles and dimples.

"One of the seniors goes abroad for an art



course. I just wish she could see that child, she would go half crazy over her. Where did she come from?"

"Tate me up, Auntie Jue," said the musical voice.

Juliet lifted her on her lap, but she climbed up and clasped both arms around the elder's neck.

"Oh, who is she? I never saw a more beautiful child."

Helen started up, but the baby buried her face in the little hollow of the neck, clinging to her protector.

"She is my Easter offering for all the good things I enjoy."

"And you have begun the real orphan asylum?" with a sort of insistent gayety. "Where did you find her?"

"In the slums, I may say. She was too sweet and precious to leave there. Her mother died. She was employed in a corset factory and boarded with another poor woman who did not feel able to keep the child with three little ones of her own. Mrs. Osborne found some one to adopt her. We are trying to place out



these orphans in real homes. The lady was charmed with her and had no children. Before the month was up she brought her back and cried over her great disappointment. It seems a friend some years before had taken a bright pretty boy, who had proved an incorrigible thief and had to be sent to the reform school. Her husband would not consent to her adopting the child, but the weeks of good care and cleanliness had improved her so that she appealed to my heart. I love them when they can talk and have ideas. Babies do not appeal to me except in pity when they are neglected and ill fed."

"But you don't know anything about her. Where is the father?"

"He had deserted the mother before the child was born. That is all she ever told. There was no marriage certificate. There are hundreds of deserted women and fatherless children."

"But do you mean to keep her?"

"Why not? She is sweet and cunning and so far has developed no bad traits. We are all very much in love with her and I sincerely pity



the poor woman who was not allowed to have her. The children are growing so they will soon be quite young ladies. Oh, you will be surprised! And I like tender, clinging things. You see, I have no husband to forbid me," and a delicious contentment illumined her face. "Oh, there come the children!"

Juliet went to the window and Helen followed. Wilma was driving the phaeton with two dainty ponies, who arched their heads gayly. The baby waved her hand.

"She has grown so fond of them."

The girls sprang out and the man led the ponies around to the stable. Baby struggled to get down and ran eagerly out to the hall to be smothered with kisses. Then they entered to greet Helen. Yes, they had grown and were bright and rosy, pretty with the divine charm of youth and health. Wilma had outgrown her twin, and was not so delicate looking.

"What do you call the baby?"

"Baby, mostly. But her real name is Theodora, Gift of God: at least that is my name for her. She is to be legally adopted, made my



niece. Helen, you will have to share the fortune with her."

"And how many more?" was the humorous inquiry.

"Isn't she a dear, Miss Helen? I wish we might call you Cousin Helen. We say Aunt Juliet now. I get so tired of Miss everybody in school."

"Why, yes. I should like it. And is school as pleasant as ever?"

"Oh, yes. But there are no real small children. We all grow up so. Why couldn't you bring that lovely Miss Shirley who came last summer? Oh, we did like her so!" in a longing tone.

"Mr. Bell has taken her off to Virginia to marry her, and they will live in New York, so you may see them both."

"She told us such splendid stories and sang such pretty songs. Then we ran races and played croquet. Oh, we *did* like her!"

"She is very sweet."

"Run upstairs, children, and get ready for dinner. And you may take baby up to the nursery."



"How very motherly that sounds!" laughed Helen. "Yes, you will have the asylum."

"There are so many of them wanting real homes and love; even make-believe real love is better than institutional care. And do you know, there is a great deal of false sentiment exploited about mother love from the highest to the lowest. The rich woman has her dog beside her in the carriage, while the maid wheels her little son or daughter along the street, stopping to talk to cronies and perhaps calling on her own friends in the crowded tenements. Then there are poor women who bring children into the world and almost hate the poor innocents, and see them die with stolid complacency. Others are left on doorsteps or bundled into foundling hospitals. I think women ought to learn the duties and responsibilities of motherhood."

She, with such fine maternal instincts, ought to have a household of her very own, Helen thought. Yet was there any grander and more unselfish work than caring for the 'least of these'?

Helen smiled as she discerned traces of Mrs.



Aldred's refined care in the Gartneys. Surroundings did make a difference. At college there were girls who were noisy and ill-bred, who made no distinction of persons from what they considered independence, who were impertinent to teachers and boyishly rude to associates. Some of them did get toned down in their four years.

After they were all dismissed Helen and Juliet held quite a conference on the year that had gone, on the new acquaintances they had made. Helen spoke of Miss Carr.

"She wasn't really as attractive as that Miss Kent of our last year at Aldred House. She went shabby and seemed not to mind ill-fitting clothes. Her scholarship was excellent, but she never evinced the least enthusiasm, as if a high percentage was the most ordinary thing. She had had a hard life and worked her way through, but she seemed to take no pride in it; her curious egotism was like a Chinese wall around her. And then thinking of Mrs. Aldred's loving, sympathetic ways I tried to do a little missionary work."

"How was that? I am interested. But first



let me tell you about Rowena Kent, lest I shall forget it. She has taken her degree, had a hospital practice, and now they have gone up in the old part of the Bronx where there are some cottages left. Celia Logan has a garden that is a show. And they do live in the most charming manner. Miss Kent gowns herself with excellent taste and has learned to smile in a really beguiling fashion. She is doing a fine work among the mothers, who would scout a man's advice, and is tender to the poor little babies. They are a most interesting couple. Now for your story."

Helen detailed her episode with blushes and laughter, especially how she had shopped with Miss Carr, and some of the sad facts she had learned about her, "though I think her rigid way of being utterly sufficient for herself was a great misfortune. We ought not to blame fate for the things we do ourselves."

"No, indeed. Helen, would you like to invite her here? I had two clerks from a store a while ago, who were tired out to the last degree. They were not young, and hope was dying a lingering death. But they did have a



nice time and went back with renewed courage. One of them had a sort of lover who never kept any position long and would have made her life a burden. There are so many foolish marriages. I think she quite resolved to discard him, for it seemed that if they ever went on any little pleasure trip she paid for it, and had to think for him always."

"I wish girls—women—were not so afraid of being old maids. And I wonder two or three of them do not live together in a home-like fashion. The home is their ideal, after all. And flats are so convenient."

"But your friend——"

"I don't believe it would be best," returned Helen, slowly. "I am afraid she would rail inwardly at the unequal distribution of this world's goods when she saw your luxury. She doesn't quite insist, but she feels that any one who is rich could be good and happy. She will have to fight some questions out for herself, for you cannot convince her. Only a long experience will ever convert her, but I do believe she is beginning to think that going through the world with your hand against



everybody is not the way to win friends. College is a little world."

"And we could talk all night, but I must have pity on you after these days of labor."

"Still the night would not be 'devoid of ease,' even if we watched the stars go down the skies. But I can't finish up in one evening. There are two more important chapters, and a little advice to ask."

"Oh, Helen! not about a new lover?"

Helen laughed merrily. "No, although I think I was introduced to everybody's brother and cousin, often prefaced with 'This is the Helen Grant I was telling of,' as if they had discussed me. There is another Miss Grant, a sweet, modest girl, who does not suffer from the *ægis* of a distinguished father, and who will only squeeze through with two years in the seniors. See what it is to have fame thrust upon you!"

"And to win it yourself," kissing her fondly. "I am glad you love the world and all that therein is. I am finding it a splendid thing to live."



## CHAPTER XVII

### HELEN GRANT'S DECISION

THEY were sorry to let Helen go to her friends.

"But it is only for ten days, and after that I shall indulge in unlimited laziness," she answered in her joyous fashion.

She had discussed Professor and Mrs. Yarrow, she had told Juliet of the high school proffer.

"It would be more restful at Mrs. Aldred's, but I think I have a longing to see what I can do in the larger world where the efforts will be greater. I have had a nice time at college; it's funny, but these last two years girls have fairly kowtowed to me. I may want some of the vanity and egotism taken out of me. And now you may dream over this grave subject in my absence. I am almost sorry to go."

For Helen had fallen quite as much in love with the baby as Juliet. She certainly was



adorable, with the sweetest temper imaginable.

"It really seems as if she must have come from superior people," Helen declared. "I suppose the mother's story was true?"

"There can be no doubt."

"Well, she may presently develop some total depravity. And it is nice the twins are not jealous of her."

Helen met with a warm welcome from her friends. The Denmans' son, Harold, was home and at once constituted himself the cavalier of the two visitors, though two neighboring young men were invited to the pleasures. There was a small beautiful lake where they went rowing, there were picnics and teas, and merry talks about college pranks and fearful grinds, and comical answers that had been given to grave questions. They were not too old to find enjoyment in everything.

"Miss Grant is splendid and jolly," said Harold, "but I'm a bit afraid of her—she does seem to know about everything. And the idea of her making astronomical calculations for a professor. Whew! Some of our boys couldn't



do that. But Miss Brooks is such a sweet, everyday, lovely body; you can hardly imagine her being a college teacher."

Amid the fun and nonsense Leslie felt she could not drag out her precious secret to the light. Lorraine was very full of the coming journey as well. Mr. Denman was a most gracious host. The little girl was the pet of the family and bade fair to be spoiled.

The ten days passed so rapidly that Leslie hardly had time for a confidence with Helen until they were seated in the car, as for some distance they were to journey together. There were few passengers and they sat at one end, which in itself was provocative of confidence.

"You have not settled upon anything yet, I suppose?" Leslie asked, studying her companion.

"Not exactly. But in less than a week I must decide upon an offer," and a thoughtful mark settled between Helen's eyes.

"The boarding school?"

"Between that and another opportunity. I think you just saw Mr. Hildreth, the Yarrows' friend?"



"Oh, that tall, elderly man?"

"Yes. He lives at Westfield, a pretty, rather aristocratic town. They want a high school teacher. The duties cannot be very onerous this year, as the number of students will not be large. In one way it is complimentary and it will give a standing that I might be two or three years in attaining. The salary is good. Mr. Hildreth is chairman of the board of education. The answer must go by August first."

"Oh, I wish you could stay. My place will be open another year. There might be something else. Even professors marry," laughing with quaint humor.

"I'd like to try some new place. I'm afraid I have been coddled too much. There ought to be some mental strain, perhaps vicissitudes, to test one's mettle. And this place is not so very far from New York, quite near another city. There would be advantages."

"What do the Yarrows say?"

"Advise me to try it by all means."

"Oh, dear, then you will go. Mrs. Yarrow has quite a large experience as a vantage ground in advising. And I have none at all. I



should be afraid to start out. But you have so much courage," and there was admiration in the shining eyes.

"Or daring or just curiosity."

"How we shall be scattered about!"

"But you will be in a safe haven presently. And I suppose you are very much in love."

"Much more than I was even a month ago," and a lovely, reverent expression flitted across her countenance. "It is queer, but I feel now as if I had loved Mr. Morse from our first meeting. And they liked him so at brother's. I can't see why such a wonderful thing should happen to me."

"But being asked in marriage happens every day," with a piquant smile. "Lorraine is counting on it. And I hope it will come to her. She is one of the girls that would be miserable in an aimless life and she is not strictly intellectual. She will love her own home, she will gather a circle of friends about her, be happy in her husband and her children, the average life of the average woman."

"But—you don't despise it, Helen?" rather deprecatingly, the sweet eyes upraised.



"My dear, no. There are many who learn to govern their wants by the ordinary creed and it is a most excellent thing. I suppose it is recognizing one's limitations, staying in the middle of the pasture, and being content with the radiant sunshine, the fragrant dews, and the sweet grass. And they are happy women."

"Do I come in that category?" Leslie raised her eyes, hesitatingly. "At least, I want to be happy."

"Leslie, I think you would not be content without doing some work for humanity. Miss Morse could not. Miss Craven could not. And this is one reason why you are so happy in your love. It has a broader meaning to you, a life to be lived not merely for enjoyment. You couldn't imagine Lorraine doing parish work for the love of God and her fellow creatures, yet she will be good and generous with her means and sympathy. Women do not always get into the right places, I am quite certain, but those are happiest who do."

They came to the point of divergence.

"Helen, I love you better than any girl at college. Write to me as soon as you decide.



Oh, I am so sorry to say good-by," and the tears stood in her eyes.

Helen winked hard. The landscape was blurred. What would life be without these blessed friendships!

There were hosts of letters awaiting her. Leslie and Lorraine were not the only friends she had made. There was one from Mrs. Yarrow, bright, hopeful, and urging her to decide in favor of the school. "Almost everybody was taking a journey. She was glad to stay in her dear home and drink deep draughts of happiness."

Then she opened Mr. Hildreth's, her girlish vanity pleased that he should consider there was any necessity of writing. The school building was finished outwardly. He had seen Mr. Underwood, who was pleased with the prospect of a teacher with such a fine record. For that Miss Grant would end by disappointing him he could not believe. He had two nice homes for her in his mind, one with a delightful widow lady of the old school, who had been well educated in her day and would be most glad of her companionship; the other in a cler-



gyman's family, where there were some charming young people. He should wait anxiously to hear from her—would she please set his mind entirely at rest?

Then there was a long exuberant epistle from Shirley with an account of the wedding. Neighbors had come from far and near. Eloise had adorned the old drawing-room with flowers; mamma had worn her own white satin wedding gown, Eloise hers; there had been a splendid feast and the old retainers of the family had a supper out on the green. Her brother, the midshipman, had brought a friend with him, and altogether it was much grander than Shirley had thought possible. Willard was the dearest and she the happiest being on earth, she was sure. They had been at Fortress Monroe and Annapolis, now they were at Washington, which was magnificent but nearly deserted. What was Helen going to do? Surely she would not return to college again. But how happy and lovely it had been!

Juliet came out on the porch with the baby in her arms and with a tranquil Madonna grace.



"You have been almost swamped," she said, laughingly.

Helen handed over the two she had read last. "Shirley is up to the seventh heaven. And after that epistle I surely must take Westfield for my point of duty. And this is from Miss Carr—I am almost afraid to open it. I've been so full of pleasure that I seem to resent a shadow even."

Juliet stood down the baby, who began to play with the hammock tassels and talk to them in her dainty fashion.

"Congratulate me," Miss Carr began. "The position Professor Blake spoke of is mine. How friendly he is in spite of the frown the girls used to dread. Didn't they know when they came to college that they were expected to study? The place is in western New York, a collegiate school, and the salary so exceeds my expectations that I have bought the silk dress. It will be trimmed with black lace and made somewhat modern, I suppose. The dress-maker said there really was nothing amiss with my figure if I stood up straight and took calisthenics, and held up my chin. The old brown



cashmere and the black alpaca I gave to the laundress. It really did grind me to do it. It mortifies me to admit it, but I am resolved to lead a broader life, and tell you, lest you should think my reformation had progressed further than it truly has. I dare say I shall have many black hours, many times of fear when I want to spend a dollar or two that I shall come to want when I am seventy or thereabouts. Still I may not live to that period. Do you pin much faith on heredity? I've always fought against the thriftlessness of my father. He didn't even, like Mr. Micawber, wait for something to turn up. He sat down serenely as if he was sure of being provided for. I've always hated that sort of trust. Perhaps his experience of life led him to it. Suppose I should develop some such traits! Yet I fancy I do judge life by the happenings that seem laid upon me, that have taken away the hopes and dreams of success that most women indulge in—I was going to say, come natural to them. We are here without any volition of our own, we must live or starve or go out of the world when we find there is no place for us. I have



tried faithfully with many sacrifices to find standing room where I could save up enough money to relieve the world at large of my old age. Dare I trust this opening—seize on the crumbs of happiness from the overflowing tables of others?

“Helen Grant, you have opened a new world to me. I can’t believe in it all at once. Can I find the better way? Bits of the year’s experiences come back to us. Could I have had the interest and the sympathy if I had shown myself ready for it? Poor, plain, with no graces of character, none of the suave, appealing manner that wins so easily. There, I will not bore you with any further infelicities. Now and then you shall hear from me, if you do not forget one not worth remembering.”

“You may read this, too,” began Helen. “I am very glad that some good fortune has attended her. I wish she could begin to hope in real earnest instead of that dreary pessimism. Is it true humility when one exaggerates one’s own defects, and really thrusts aside what might make life more joyful and helpful?”

An inspiring light shone in Juliet’s eyes.



"I think I had a little experience of that when I came to Aldred House," she said. "If I could have had Mrs. Howard at first—but Mrs. Davis impressed the fact upon me that I had no beauty and no attractiveness, and that dress and my money must win me a husband, the great desideratum of a woman's life. I longed for girls' society and friendship and, I must confess, some education. There was so much richness in the world for one to gather——"

"But you were not bitter and sort of defiant, like Miss Carr," interrupted Helen.

"I had the fear of everything engendered by so much solitude, and the influence of a man just the opposite of Mr. Carr. Helen, I *am* interested in her. I wish I could do something to help her. Do not allow her to drop out of your life."

"To love is to serve, or desire to. And some very unpromising people do appeal to our love, if charity is but another name for it. I am desirous to learn what she will make of herself this year. But, you see," with an arch, half-amused expression, "I must decide my



own fate. Mr. Hildreth's letter must be answered. I should like to know what Westfield was like."

"Why, we might take a journey there."

"That would seem to throw a little doubt on Mr. Hildreth. I like him very much. He ought to be president of a college. Why, he does resemble President Jordan in many respects. After I have accepted I should like to see about the home for myself. Then if you will make your kind proffer again——"

Juliet laughed. "You have resolved, then?"

Helen sprang up flushing, yet with exhilaration in every line of her face.

"Yes, it has come to me suddenly. After all I can endure it a year, I think, even if I shouldn't like it over well. I want some regular discipline; no, not that exactly, but to be where I must depend upon myself in all emergencies. Then I shall learn what a four years' college training is worth, and whether it will be best to send your girls to college."

Juliet glanced up, nodding with amusement.

So Helen sent her acceptance and said she



and a friend would like to visit Westfield presently and plan about her new home.

Then it seemed as if she would never get all the other letters answered, for besides those of the most intimate friends there were many from girls she had hardly thought of taking, or rather keeping, in her life. But she could not find it in her heart to dismiss them just yet.

Mrs. Osborne came up a few days later to see the little child who had interested her so much, as she was on the committee of adoption.

"She is the sweetest little thing I ever saw!" exclaimed Helen, enthusiastically. "And I think she has found just the friend to make her life what it should be. She is too lovely to take the ordinary chances of the poor and dependent."

"Under some circumstances beauty is a dangerous gift. My dear girl, for you still seem so to me, we can never thank you enough for Miss Craven. She has so much wisdom with her kindness, and we do find some eager workers very ill-balanced; others who think a



little money everything, and still another class of patrons who think the poor ungrateful if they are not continually giving thanks, and are also afraid of taking them out of their sphere, as if it was not every one's duty to come up to the very best within him or her. It is a great delight to work with a woman like Miss Craven."

Helen's face glowed with pleasure.

"And that reminds me. I have a message to deliver. Let us go out to her."

Juliet had been superintending the cutting of a great basket of flowers to send into the city. She came up the steps radiant with health and pleasure.

"I saw one member of your last summer's pleasant house party," began Mrs. Osborne, "the young man, my son's friend, who was at Balem with us, Mr. Danforth. He came to us after he had been here and described it as the best time of his life. He met a Mr. Morse whom he liked very much. Of course, you knew he gave up a chance of making a good deal of money and decided to study for the ministry?"



"Yes, we heard that," returned Miss Craven, as Helen did not speak.

"He called a week ago, I think it was, and wished me to remember him most cordially to Miss Craven and say that memory of the visit had been a pleasure to him all the year, and that he should have come up in person if there had been time. He had been playing the Good Samaritan to a young fellow-student who had gone very far astray with that awful drug, cocaine. Mr. Danforth had been assisting his mother to care for him, as even in his wildest moments he clung to Mr. Danforth. The mother has a large fortune and he is her only son, a bright young fellow when he is in his right mind. What an awful shame that he should have yielded to the habit! I pity the poor mother. She has taken a cottage in the Adirondacks and Mr. Danforth is to go to tutor him and see if he can get him so he will retain his standing. He could spend only one night at home. He gets well paid for this, which is right, since he is working his way through. He is one of the resolute, manly young men, and his father may well feel proud



of him. I have my eye on him for a future son-in-law," she ended, laughingly.

"I am very glad to hear of him," returned Miss Craven. "I hope he will not wear himself out in these strenuous endeavors."

"He is the picture of health and energy. I think more young men wear themselves out in dissipation than in real honest work. And Mr. Bell is married? I was surprised, though he may have made a sensible choice. She was in college with you, was she not, Miss Grant? I own I was rather disappointed——"

"Yes," interposed Helen, hurriedly turning her face a little aside, as she felt the flush. "She was a very charming little body. And Mrs. Bell is extremely fond of her."

"Then it is all right," with a half-convinced nod.

But afterward she said to Miss Craven: "I was sure he would marry Helen Grant, he was so proud and fond of her."

"I think this a wiser choice," Juliet replied.

Helen was thinking over the visit that evening, as she sat on the porch alone, her friend



talking business in the library with two men. Had she felt a little hurt at not hearing directly from Gordon Danforth after their talk and the sort of missed confidence at the last? He had been so eager and friendly the few times she had seen him, and he must have known that she was interested in his career.

"I've had so much admiration that I have turned silly," and she gave herself a good mental shake. "I'm looking for every one to take me into first consideration. There are many fine girls in the world, and a man with such a personality and force of character, and so much laid out **for** him to do, would be idiotic to stop and bother with them. I do hope he will succeed in his aims, and it certainly was noble to give up the chance of a fortune and content himself with poverty when he had seen it in his father's life."

And she, too, had made her decision, though no great moral or spiritual question had been settled by it. She felt suddenly, sitting there alone in the starlight with the gentle hymn of nature like an accompaniment to the march she was beginning, that she was going out of the



lovely realm of girlhood. There had been perplexities in it, a great sacrifice to try her obedience to duty, and yet it had not been required. The way had been made pleasant for her instead. Knowledge and sweetness, friends, success on her chosen lines—ah, how lovely the way had proved, blossom and fruit!

And now womanhood loomed up before her in this curious unfolding existence. Would she be lifted up to finer heights, to a more complete soul comprehension, to the harmony that God meant human lives should evolve? She had accepted a duty, could she go at it with high, unwavering trust, giving back as had been dealt out to her by the hand of Infinite Love?

Helen Grant looked down the new path that was to test the worth of the past years with a little fear and trembling. Yet it was not exactly like leaving girlhood behind, it was to be incorporated in the new life, it was to bear the fruit of high, earnest endeavor, to strengthen her for the years that would lead up to the mountain tops of joy and satisfaction, and



down again to that glorious peace well earned, the time of folded hands.

And so we shall leave her, looking forward to an enjoyable summer and the active work that must follow, but shall meet her again as "Helen Grant, Teacher."

THE END







# HELEN GRANT SERIES

By AMANDA M. DOUGLAS

Illustrated by AMY BROOKS Cloth Price per volume \$1.25



**Helen Grant's Schooldays**

**Helen Grant's Friends**

**Helen Grant at Aldred House**

**Helen Grant in College**

**Helen Grant, Senior**

**H**ELLEN GRANT and her friends represent the best type of college girls, those of the highest aims and ideals, and she herself develops to admiration in each successive phase of her career.—*Milwaukee Free Press.*

Helen Grant is a lovable and capable American girl, and the young people who follow her experiences as depicted by Miss Douglas are sure to be the better for it.—*Herald and Presbyterian.*

Miss Douglas has had long experience in writing books for girls. Into her stories she puts the influence of high ideals, remembering all the time that girls are not to be deprived of their good times, but that play and earnest endeavor contribute each a share to the making of womanly character.—*Christian Register.*

In "Helen Grant," Miss Douglas has created a splendid type of American girlhood, strong, energetic, intelligent, and winsome. Her progress under difficulties, and her unusual power to win and keep friends, have delighted her readers.—*Chicago Advance.*

---

For sale by all booksellers or sent postpaid on receipt of price by the publishers

**LOTHROP, LEE & SHEPARD CO.,  
BOSTON**





# BRAVE HEART SERIES

By Adele E. Thompson

## Betty Seldon, Patriot

Illustrated 12mo Cloth \$1.25

A BOOK that is at the same time fascinating and noble. Historical events are accurately traced leading up to the surrender of Cornwallis at Yorktown, with reunion and happiness for all who deserve it.

## Brave Heart Elizabeth

Illustrated 12mo Cloth \$1.25

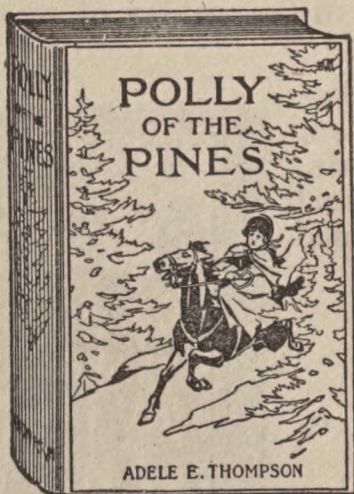
IT is a story of the making of the Ohio frontier, much of it taken from life, and the heroine one of the famous Zane family after which Zanesville, O., takes its name. An accurate, pleasing, and yet at times intensely thrilling picture of the stirring period of border settlement.

## A Lassie of the Isles

Illustrated by J. W. Kennedy  
12mo Cloth \$1.25

THIS is the romantic story of Flora Macdonald, the lassie of Skye, who aided in the escape of Charles Stuart, otherwise known as the "Young Pretender," for which she suffered arrest, but which led to signal honor through her sincerity and attractive personality.

## Polly of the Pines



Illustrated by

Henry Roth Cloth 12mo \$1.25

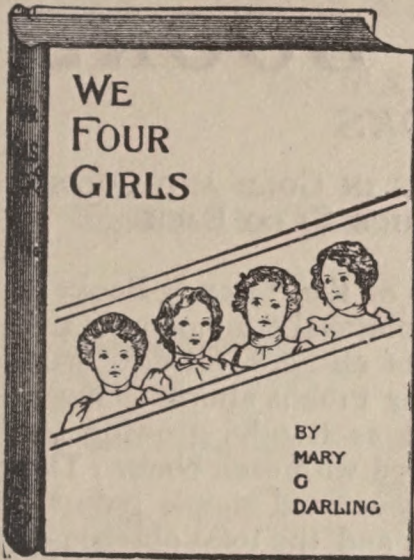
"POLLY OF THE PINES" was Mary Dunning, a brave girl of the Carolinas, and the events of the story occur in the years 1775-82. Polly was an orphan living with her mother's family, who were Scotch Highlanders, and for the most part intensely loyal to the Crown. Polly finds the glamor of royal adherence hard to resist, but her heart turns towards the patriots and she does much to aid and encourage them.



*For sale by all booksellers, or sent postpaid on receipt  
of price by the publishers*

**LOTHROP, LEE & SHEPARD CO., BOSTON**





# We Four Girls

By MARY G. DARLING 12mo Cloth Illustrated by BERTHA G. DAVIDSON  
\$1.25

"WE FOUR GIRLS" is a bright story of a summer vacation in the country, where these girls were sent for study and recreation. The story has plenty of natural incidents; and a mild romance, in which they are all interested, and of which their teacher is the principal person, gives interest to the tale. They thought it the most delightful summer they ever passed.

## A Girl of this Century

By MARY G. DARLING Cloth Illustrated by LILIAN CRAWFORD TRUE \$1.25

THE same characters that appear in "We Four Girls" are retained in this story, the interest centering around "Marjorie," the natural leader of the four. She has a brilliant course at Radcliffe, and then comes the world. A romance, long resisted, but worthy in nature and of happy termination, crowns this singularly well-drawn life of the noblest of all princesses — a true American girl.



## Beck's Fortune A Story of School and Seminary Life

By ADELE E. THOMPSON Cloth Illustrated \$1.25

THE characters in this book seem to live, their remarks are bright and natural, and the incidental humor delightful. The account of Beck's narrow and cheerless early life, her sprightly independence, and unexpected competency that aids her to progress through the medium of seminary life to noble womanhood, is one that mothers can commend to their daughters unreservedly.

---

For sale by all booksellers or sent postpaid on receipt of price  
by the publishers

**LOTHROP, LEE & SHEPARD CO., BOSTON**



# THE RANDY BOOKS

By AMY BROOKS

12mo CLOTH ARTISTIC COVER DESIGN IN GOLD AND COLORS  
ILLUSTRATED BY THE AUTHOR PRICE \$1.00 EACH



The progress of the "Randy Books" has been one continual triumph over the hearts of girls of all ages, for dear little fun-loving sister Prue is almost as much a central figure as Randy, growing toward womanhood with each book. The sterling good sense and simple naturalness of Randy, and the total absence of slang and viciousness, make these books in the highest degree commendable, while abundant life is supplied by the doings of merry friends, and there is rich humor in the droll rural characters.

*Randy's Summer*

*Randy's Good Times*

*Randy's Winter*

*Randy's Luck*

*Randy and Her Friends*    *Randy's Loyalty*

*Randy and Prue*

*Randy's Prince*

"The Randy Books are among the very choicest books for young people to make a beginning with."

—*Boston Courier.*

"The Randy Books of Amy Brooks have had a deserved popularity among young girls. They are wholesome and moral without being goody-goody."

—*Chicago Post.*



---

LOTHROP, LEE & SHEPARD CO., BOSTON



# THE GIRL WHO KEPT UP

By MARY McCRAE CUTLER

---

Illustrated by C. Louise Williams. 12mo. Cloth. \$1.25

---



This is a strong, wholesome story of achievement. The end of a high school course divides the paths of a boy and girl who have been close friends and keen rivals. The youth is to go to college, while the girl, whose family is in humbler circumstances, must remain at home and help. She sees that her comrade will feel that he is out-growing her, and she determines to and does *keep up* with him in obtaining an education.

"The story is human to the least phase of it, and it is told with such simple force and vivacity that its effect is strong and positive. The pictures of college and home life are true bits of realism. It is an excellent piece of work."—*Bookseller, Newsdealer and Stationer, New York.*

"The story is well told, and is thoroughly helpful in every respect."—*Epworth Herald, Chicago.*

"The telling of the story is attractive, and will be found helpful to all readers."—*The Baptist Union, Chicago.*

"Let us recommend this book for young people for the excellent lesson of honest striving and noble doing that it clearly conveys."—*Boston Courier.*

"It is a healthy and inspiring story."—*Brooklyn Eagle.*

"The tale is full of good lesson for all young people."—*Boston Beacon.*

"The story will be both pleasant and profitable to the youth of both sexes."—*Louisville Courier-Journal.*

---

*For sale by all booksellers, or sent postpaid on receipt of price by*

**LOTHROP, LEE & SHEPARD CO., Boston**

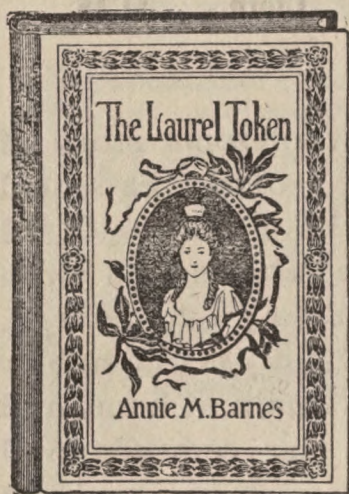


# The Laurel Token A Story of the Yemassee Uprising

By ANNIE M. BARNES

Author of "Little Betty Blew" and "A Lass of Dorchester"

Illustrated by G. W. Picknell 12mo Cloth \$1.25



This is a book for young people of either sex, for, although the leading character is a girl of eighteen, her cousins, two boys of sixteen and fourteen respectively, are prominent throughout the story, which centres about a beautiful girl, left an orphan, as is supposed, in Barbados, who goes to live with her uncle, a leading man in the flourishing "Goose Creek" colony, in the year of the Indian uprising, 1714. The very real danger from the red men, who have been regarded as friendly, but have been the victims of selfishness, and thus made ready tools for the crafty Spanish having their headquarters at St. Augustine, forms the background to the story, and gives opportunity for the surprising develop-

ments which occur respecting the heroine and others. The illustrations by Mr. Picknell are very accurate in their composition, besides being finely executed.

## An Honor Girl

By EVELYN RAYMOND Illustrated by  
Bertha G. Davidson 12mo Cloth \$1.25

A bright, helpful story of a girl who, as the valedictorian and "honor girl" of her class at high school, wins a scholarship which would take her through Wellesley College. Family reverses bring it home to her that *duty* demands that she devote herself to helping her parents and wayward brother to face the future better than they seem likely to. She heroically surrenders her prize, with its glowing prospects, to a jealous rival, and with a brave humor says that she has matriculated in the College of Life, the hard features of which she happily styles the "faculty," with "Professor Poverty" prominent among them. These prove excellent teachers, aided by "Professor Cheerfulness." Kind friends are won by her courage, her brother achieves manly character, and the family are finally re-established on the road to prosperity: all better, happier, and more to each other than had selfishness not been so well met and overcome by "An Honor Girl."



*For sale by all booksellers, or sent postpaid on receipt of price by the publishers.*

**LOTHROP, LEE & SHEPARD CO., Boston**



# THE FAMOUS PEPPER BOOKS

By MARGARET SIDNEY

I N O R D E R O F P U B L I C A T I O N

Cloth 12mo Illustrated \$1.50 each

---

## Five Little Peppers and How they Grew.

This was an instantaneous success; it has become a genuine child classic.

## Five Little Peppers Midway.

"A perfect Cheeryble of a book."—*Boston Herald*.

## Five Little Peppers Grown Up.

This shows the Five Little Peppers as "grown up," with all the struggles and successes of young manhood and womanhood.

## Phronsie Pepper.

It is the story of Phronsie, the youngest and dearest of all the Peppers.

## The Stories Polly Pepper Told.

Wherever there exists a child or a "grown-up," there will be a welcome for these charming and delightful "Stories Polly Pepper told."

## The Adventures of Joel Pepper.

As bright and just as certain to be a child's favorite as the others in the famous series. Harum-scarum "Joey" is lovable.

## Five Little Peppers Abroad.

The "Peppers Abroad" adds another most delightful book to this famous series.

## Five Little Peppers at School.

Of all the fascinating adventures and experiences of the "Peppers," none will surpass those contained in this volume.

## Five Little Peppers and Their Friends.

The friends of the Peppers are legion and the number will be further increased by this book.

## Ben Pepper.

This story centres about Ben, "the quiet, steady-as-a-rock boy," while the rest of the Peppers help to make it as bright and pleasing as its predecessors.

## Five Little Peppers in the Little Brown House.

Here they all are, Ben, Polly, Joel, Phronsie, and David, in the loved "Little Brown House," with such happenings crowding one upon the other as all children delightedly follow, and their elders find no less interesting.

---

LOTHROP, LEE & SHEPARD CO., BOSTON



















